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TO OUR READERS:

In compliance with the Israeli military authorities, and under the gu[illegible] 945, [illegible]row Al-Fajr is required to submit all material prepared for publication in this w[illegible] Edition, to the Israeli censorship authorities, who use this blanket authority excessively. The material appearing on page[illegible]sted with letters has all been censored and expunged by the Israeli authorities. We found it necessary and relevant to publish it on these pages in the foreign edition.

Polling station in East Jerusalem, guarded by a soldier and surrounded by police: there are widespread allegations of bribery among the Palestinians who voted./ST

No Real Change in Council Polls

October 25 was polling day in the municipal and council elections inside the 'green line'. Elections were held in 46 Palestinian villages in the Galilee and the Triangle. The main battle in them was between the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, which ran in virtually every contest, and 350-plus *hamula* lists established by the Israeli establishment.

Progressive nationalists ran in a handful of villages. As the results trickled in it became clear that on a country-wide scale there had been little change in the overall balance of power with the Front's losses more or less cancelling its gains.

In Nazareth, the only Arab city inside the pre-'67 borders, the Front consolidated its position. Mayor MK Tawfiq Zayyad upped his personal poll to 69 percent, his list gaining 11 seats, like last time. The Israeli-backed opposition was virtually wiped out, however. Four of the remaining seats went to a new nationalist list.

Some of the first results were as follows:

NAZARETH: Mayor Tawfiq Zayyad (DFPE), 11 DFPE seats for the council.
SHAFA' AMR: Mayor Ibrahim Nimr Hussein (independent), 2 seats for DFPE.
TAIBEH: Abd al-Latif Habib.
KUFR YASSIF: Nimr Murcus (DFPE), 4 seats for the DFPE.
IKSAL: Yehyah Salah (DFPE), 3 seats for the DFPE.
ARRABEH: Mohammed Nasser (DFPE), 5 seats for the DFPE.
DEIR HANNAH: Raja Khatib (DFPE), 6 seats for the DFPE.
NAZARETH-YAFA: Assad Yusef (DFPE), 5 seats for the DFPE.
TIREH: Tareq Abd al-Hai (DFPE).
UM AL-FAHM, BAQA GHARBIEH, JISH, KABUL, RAMEH, JULIUS: No clear winner in the first round and will have to hold a second round of elections for mayor.
MASHAD: Dr Yusef Mir'i, 5 seats for the DFPE-coalition.
TORA'AN: Yunes Nasser.
YARKA: Mohammed Mala'.
MAJD AL-KRUM: Mohammed Mana'a, 4-5 seats for the DFPE.
HAIFA: One council member for the DFPE, Zahi Karkabi.
DEIR AL-ASSAD: Ahmad Amoun, 4 seats for the Progressive Front.
JDIDEH: Afif Kial (DFPE), 4 seats for the DFPE.
SAKHNIN: Mohammed Ghanem (independent), 5 seats for the DFPE.

Why Some Arabs Voted

In Jerusalem a "massive campaign of bribery, exploitation of personal interests and religious sensitivities and the absence of a well-organised anti-election campaign," in the words of one local observer, brought East Jerusalemites to the polls.

On polling day, the town was rife with rumours of corruption. A group of 15 drivers sitting at Kollek's East Jerusalem election centre was waiting to be paid for their services the day after the polls. One driver, who refused to mention his name, said that he transferred residents of Shufat quarter from their homes to the polling station. The 30-year-old driver told *Al Fajr*, "I do not care about politics and I only care about money." Another driver claimed that Likud candidate Tussia-Cohen had offered him US$250 a day to work for him. He said he turned it down.

Ordinary voters employed in Israeli institutions have to vote (the voting record is stamped

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The list of West Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek paid IS3000 to anyone in East Jerusalem bringing in votes for the aging candidate for mayor in the October 25 municipal elections, according to two people working out of the Kollek office in Thouri. They were speaking to *Al Fajr* one day before the poll.

East Jerusalem residents Nabih and Ya'aqoub Gheith spoke to *Al Fajr* after leaving the 'One Jerusalem' election propaganda base in Thouri. They said they had been promised IS3000, to be paid October 26. Each of them carried lists of names issued to them by the office and said they were going out to "try and influence them."

According to Nabih and Ya'aqoub Gheith ,"a few other residents had also been recruited by 'One Jerusalem' for the same fee. They said recruits are informed by the office on how to go about their work.

Both Gheith's rejected the idea that they were motivated solely by money. "Kollek is the best of a bad lot," they affirmed.

At 'One Jerusalem' headquarters, Mr Gur, in charge of public relations for the list and Kollek himself, said the Gheiths were "probably Likud. Teddy doesn't have to pay people, it must be one of our rivals."

"This may have been the way in Israel in the 1950s," Gur added, "but not today. There's no doubt about it at all."

The police spokesman was unavailable for comment.

An East Jerusalem political activist said people who break the almost universal boycott of the polls by Palestinian Jerusalemites for principled reasons "are either politically ignorant or social deviants who care only for money."

Another prominent source, however, pointed out that some vote because they are either Histadrut (Israel Labour Federation) or municipal employees who fear they will lose their jobs.

Nabih Gheith told *Al Fajr*, "We were told that if we do not vote, they would pull our Histadrut cards so that we would not be able to receive medical treatment at Kupat Holim (the Histadrut sick fund clinics)."

277 MNF Troops Die In Beirut Blasts

Two hundred and twenty-one US Marines and 56 French paratroopers died in two massive blasts that razed their respective headquarters in Beirut to the ground, October 23. The latest figures as released by official spokesmen, October 27, included 75 injured Marines who were moved to hospitals in Western Europe and an unspecified number of missing personnel. The French casualties included two missing and 15 injured.

Official reports said that the two successive blasts were caused by two bombs of 900 kilograms of TNT loaded on trucks which broke through security barriers and exploded inside the buildings. The US Marines headquarters in Beirut airport and the French are based in Ramlet al-Baida.

by Livia Rokach
Our Rome Correspondent

Who, in Beirut, has given the first world power, and the American leadership, that more openly than any of its predecessors sustains the use of brutal force in international conflicts, the worst slap in the face since Vietnam?

As we write — three days after the bomb attacks which on Sunday morning at 6:20 am and 6:23 am respectively completely destroyed the US Marines headquarters, situated between Khalde airport and Burj al-Barajneh, and the French paratroopers base, two kilometres away in Ramlet al-Baide neighbourhood, leaving on the ground and under rubble a total of nearly 400 military dead and dozens of wounded — this is the question on which most attention is concentrated in Beirut and the Western capitals of the Multinational Forces (MNF).

With the body count of US Marines reaching 191 plus more than 60 believed buried under the rubble of the five wings of the American command buildings, and 75 other American soldiers injured seriously enough to be air-transported to hospitals in US military bases in West Germany and Italy, and with 45 French paratroopers dead, more than 20 wounded and at least another 20 hopelessly buried under the eight-storey headquarters which crumbled like a house of cards, five percent of the entire NATO-sponsored MNF land forces in Lebanon were wiped ut within a matter of seconds.

This fact proved beyond any doubt not only the vulnerability of the MNF and its non-defensibility in the conditions imposed by the reality of the Lebanese quagmire, but also the nature of the American and French MNF contingents as parties actively involved in the internal conflict, thus becoming a target for hostility, with no room left for the mystifications of a "peace force" trumpeted by the official propaganda.

As a result, splits and ruptures are deepening in the Western MNF camp behind the show of unity, compactness and decision. Splits are emerging both between the partners in the force and in the public and political spheres of each contributor. Both the role and actual continued presence of the MNF in Lebanon is being questioned.

Already the British government has announced "the necessity of reconsidering and redefining the presence of the MNF and of setting a time limit for the latter."

Italy reconfirmed its intention to continue to limit the role of its troops to the protection of the civilian population in Beirut, in particular of the Palestinian camps. The Italian government announced the postponement *sine die* of all previous plans to send observers into the Shouf area.

Reliable reports speak of a spirit of revolt among the French troops stationed in Lebanon as the real reason for President Francois Mitterand's blitz visit to Beirut on Monday morning.

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2 Israelis 3 Lebanese Killed in South Lebanon

Seven Lebanese were killed and dozens were injured during clashes, bombings and exchanges of fire in the Shouf mountains and south Beirut this week. Five Multinational Forces (MNF) soldiers were also injured. At the same time, efforts to convene the reconciliation conference continued. It is due to be convened in Geneva, Switzerland, October 31.

The heaviest casualties occurred during fighting, October 26, between the National Salvation Front (NSF) forces — mainly Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) militias — and Amal movement militias on one hand and Phalangist forces with their Lebanese government army backed by the MNF on the other. Five civilians were reported killed in the clashes around Souq al-Gharb, Iqlim al-Kharoub and Qabr Chamoun. Two hours of sniper fire were reported hitting US Marines positions in the airport area south of Beirut.

Walid Jumblatt, PSP leader, threatened to boycott the reconciliation conference if the Lebanese Army and their allies and supporters did not stop breaking the cease-fire, which was agreed upon September 26.

Clashes were reported every day between October 20 and 26 in the areas of Souq al-Gharb, Iqlim al-Kharoub, Ain al-Rummaneh and the southern parts of Beirut. Unconfirmed reports talked about dozens of Lebanese civilians injured during those clashes.

On October 20, the US Marines headquarters in Beirut announced that four of their soldiers were injured in an explosion near their patrol in Beirut. A French paratrooper was injured the same day in a second explosion. Lebanese government sources said that one Lebanese soldier and a policeman were killed by sniper fire.

US sources said, October 19, that the US administration was seriously thinking of retaliating against snipers.

On the reconciliation conference front, Lebanese nationalists continued their efforts to convene it. Leaders of the NSF met in Damascus, October 27, to discuss the latest moves. Walid Jumblatt, Rashid Karami and Suleiman Fanjieh met also with Syrian officials to coordinate their positions. Nabih Berri, leader of the Amal movement, also arrived in Damascus and met with his allies in the Lebanese nationalist movement.

Amin Gemayel, Lebanese president, discussed with Syrian President Hafez Assad Syrian participation in the conference. Assad confirmed Syria's willingness to send a representative to Geneva to attend the conference, which is presently due to start at the Intercontinental Hotel on October 31.

Shouf Cease-fire Crumbling, Clashes Reported Daily

South Lebanon saw a series of demonstrations against the Israeli occupation of Lebanon this week. They escalated after the killing of three Lebanese from Jibshit village by Israeli soldiers, October 23. According to Israeli military spokesmen in Jerusalem, two Israeli soldiers were killed, October 25, in a commando ambush.

The Jibshit killings occurred after Israeli troops entered the village to search for weapons. An Israeli military spokesman claimed that the village residents attacked the Israelis with stones as they searched a house. The Israelis then summoned reinforcements. According to reports, it was this group which opened fire on the crowds, killing three people instantly. Several other residents were wounded. Some local estimates put the number at 11. *The Jerusalem Post* reported that two Israeli soldiers were wounded by rocks.

When news of the Israeli Army attack on Jibshit spread, there were demonstrations all over South Lebanon. A general strike was declared, October 25. Foreign reporters said that the area came to a standstill as virtually everyone stopped work.

Some foreign news correspondents reported that Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners in Ansar detention camp joined the strike. They quoted sources from the nearby village of Ansar as saying that they heard prisoners shouting anti-Israel slogans.

Rashid Karami, former Lebanese prime minister and a leader of the Lebanese National Salvation Front, "saluted the Lebanese people under Israeli occupation" in a letter addressed to South Lebanon's notables. He asserted the strike was an indication that the Lebanese people are determined to free their country from Israeli occupation.

Sheikh Mohammed Mahdi Shams, deputy head of the Supreme Shi'ite Council in Lebanon, in a speech directed to the residents of South Lebanon, urged escalation of the struggle against the Israeli occupation.

Attacks

According to Israeli Army reports, Corporal Mordechai Dari and Sergeant Danny Philip were ambushed and killed on the evening of October 25. Describing the attack, the Israeli News Agency (Itim) said commandos hid in a banana farm near the coastal highway north of Tyre and opened fire on an Israeli patrol of two vehicles, injuring the two soldiers. Fire was then returned and reinforcements arrived to assist the patrol, Itim said.

The two soldiers died before being evacuated to hospital. Israeli troops placed the village of Shibriha, which also holds a Palestinian refugee camp, under curfew, as soldiers assisted by helicopter mounted a search for the attackers. There were no reports that they were arrested. Later, on October 26, Israel's Defence Minister Moshe Arens and the Chief of Staff Moshe Levi visited the site of the attack and listened to an account of the incident.

In another attack on October 24, the Syrian Radio broadcasting from Damascus reported that at least seven soldiers were either killed or wounded in a rocket attack against an Israeli patrol near the village of Tfahta, in the Zahrani River area. The report said that an armoured car was attacked and destroyed completely.

There were other reports of attacks which the Israeli Army spokesman said did not result in casualties. The latest was on October 26, when light arms fire was directed at an Israeli position south of Lake Qaraoun. As Israeli troops searched the area for the attackers, they discovered a crater, apparently caused by katyusha rocket shells.

The latest official Israeli death toll in Lebanon, according to the Israeli military spokesman's office in Jerusalem, is 522. This same figure was quoted by Israeli media, October 19.

US Marines cover the bodies of dead comrades after the blast, October 23.

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Beirut Blasts

24 hours after the attacks. The scheduled meeting of the MNF's four foreign ministers in Paris to decide on future policy is thus expected to be anything but peaceful and far from a reflection of the allegedly united front of support for US goals in Lebanon which the public communiques will ostentatiously attempt to impose.

Another consequence of Sunday's attacks is the further exposure to Lebanese public opinion of the frailty of the Gemayel regime. In the wake of the American and French military support given to its army through the September phase of the war, Gemayel aspired to an image of strength. The bombing, observers say, now deprives Amin and his power structure of "all credibility."

The results of Sunday's attacks do not, however, give clear indication of the identity of the perpetrators. American and Israeli spokesmen rushed to accuse Iran and Syria of responsibility, accusations which were denied by the governments concerned. Leaders of the National Salvation Front, starting with Walid Jumblatt, and Shi'ite Amal leader Nabih Berri, condemned the attacks.

In Rome, *Il Messaggero* and *ANSA* Italian news agencies reporter Bruno Marolo said no one in Beirut takes seriously the claims by phantom groups such as "The Movement for a Free Islamic Revolution" or "The Organisation for an Islamic *Jihad*." No serious observer, they say, excludes the possibility that the attacks were carried out by that group of Phalangist militants who, sponsored, fed and armed by Israel's Mossad, have recently escalated their accusations of excessive reliance on the US and the MNF against the Gemayel regime. This group, the reports said, demands a return to an exclusive alliance with Israel, and undertakes actions intended to sabotage the "reconciliation talks" and prepare the ground for a Syrian-Israeli war, which would give them the possibility to overthrow the present military balance of power in Lebanon. This group is known to have sniped at Marines in the past two weeks from behind Amal positions in south Beirut in order to provoke revenge attacks by the American force on Shi'ite militias. They are also openly admitting to reporters their intentions to sabotage the cease-fire and the political negotiations. "We figure if we can just hold out until 1985, the Israelis will attack the Syrians again and everything will be different," a senior Christian militia leader told *The New York Time's* Thomas Friedman, among others, last week.

The mechanics of Sunday's attacks leave enough space for this or any other hypothesis. The existence of a huge crater in front of the French building seems to confirm the widely circulated version of the bombing, that it was achieved by the explosion of a truck loaded with explosives — probably 200 tons of exogen — which forced its way into the compound.

The thesis of an identical attack on the Marines headquarters is being brought into question by facts progressively coming to light. The attack is now said, by Lebanese police sources quoted by *Il Messaggero* and Marola, to have been almost certainly engineered and organised by Lebanese guests invited by the Marines to participate in a dancing party thrown the evening before and which lasted through the night. The dead body of at least one Lebanese girl who stayed overnight with a Marine was discovered among the victims. This is only one of the proofs that non-authorised outsiders visited and stayed in the "Beirut Hilton," as the Marines called their now devastated base. The massive security arrangements involving four or five big and sophisticated barriers between the compound entry and the headquarters building exclude the possibility that a truck with a suicide commando on board could have forced its way into the place, the sources say. Local experts seem convinced that the explosives were centrally placed, based on knowledge of architectural data, at a point calculated to assure the maximum effect of destruction and kill capacity: a job needing time and expertise.

The foreign ministers of the four countries participating in the multinational forces in Lebanon, the US, France, Italy and England, met in Paris, France, October 27, to discuss the role of the MNF in Lebanon after the two blasts which wrecked the headquarters of the US Marines and the French paratroopers in Beirut, October 23.

Preliminary radio reports emerging from the French capital say that the foreign ministers were particularly discussing ways to ensure the safety of the forces serving in Lebanon. According to a report by Paris-based Monte Carlo Radio, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs Claude Cheys on had expressed opposition to the expansion of the MNF area of operations in Lebanon. He was also quoted as saying that France believes in defining the term of service for the MNF.

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 182, October 28, 1983:

Number of original articles submitted to censors	24
Number of articles totally censored out	8
Number of articles mutilated beyond use	1
Number of articles passed	15

WB Teachers Demand 100% Pay Hike

West Bank teachers' representatives are organising a petition for a 100 percent pay raise to be sent to the military authorities. The General Committee of Government School Teachers in the West Bank (GCGST) , issued a statement, October 25, urging all teachers to "unite and join efforts to achieve better pay."

The statement, distributed in government schools in the West Bank, explained that the GCGST move came in response to the latest Israeli government austerity measures, which included the devaluation of the Israeli shekel by 23 percent and a 50 percent hike in the cost of basic commodities.

The statement said that the quarterly salary increase of nearly 20 percent they received last month will not cover the monthly price increases.

GCGST is backing its case for a raise with statistics. They point out that a teacher's October salary of IS17,400 is the equivalent of JD100. In November the rise brings the salary to IS20,967, but only JD93.

Teachers predict that by the time their next adjustment is due, their salary will be equivalent of JD70. "You will not be able to obtain your rights by begging officials," the statement read, "rather you should unite and determine the right method to follow in order to better your economic conditions."

Meanwhile, teacher activists are busy collecting signatures on a petition to the Israeli officer in charge of education. It contains two demands: a pay increase of 100 percent, "in order to compensate for the decline in the real salaries" and a doubling in last month's index payments.

Early last week, the GCGST wrote to the Israelis with the same demands. They received no answer.

Fadwa Labadi, a teacher in Bethlehem and a member of the committee, told *Al Fajr*, "Present economic conditions under which teachers live force them to consider action to better them."

She said teachers can hardly manage on the salary they receive now and will be in "big trouble" as their salaries decline.

Al Awda Editor Held in New Attack on Press

Director of the Palestine Press Service (PPS) and the editor-in-chief of *Al Awda* magazine, Ibrahim Qaraeen, was interrogated for four hours, October 21, and asked for the names and addresses of his magazine staff.

Plainclothes police handed a summons to Qaraeen in his Silwan house at midnight, October 20, to appear at the Moscobiyya interrogation centre the next morning. The Israeli interrogators accused him and *Al Awda* editorial staffers Bassem Abu Sumaya, Abd al-Karim Samara, Jawad Jabari and Ali Qadan of publishing "anti-Israel and uncensored material."

Qaraeen told *Al Fajr* that the authorities want to attack Palestinian journalists individually and destroy *Al Awda* and the PPS indirectly by changing its staff and even imprisoning them on all kinds of false pretexts.

The editor of the Palestinian weekly magazine told *Al Fajr* that interrogators claimed he had published "what they claim was hostile and provocative materials against the state of Israel and supported a hostile organisation in violation of the Tamir Law."

The 1980 'Tamir Law' makes any indication of support for the PLO or any Palestinian faction or any manifestation of identification with national sumbols an offence. Several Galilee and Triangle Palestinians have been jailed under this law.

Last April Jerusalem commissioner Rafael Levi sent a letter to the PPS banning distribution of the daily news release they sent to foreign journalists. They have also received several warning letters recently from military censors. Qaraeen clearly stated that the news bulletin had been stopped.

An October 21 press release by Qaraeen and *Al Awda* magazine stated: *"I believe that I may be put on trial under the Tamir Law, which has so far not been implemented since it was introduced three years ago and whose provisions will probably be applied against both the institutions and their employees.*

"I call on all those who defend freedom of speech and human rights institutions and individuals in Israel and abroad to stand up against this strict campaign by the Israeli authorities against the PPS service and *Al Awda* magazine and those who supervise and work in them."

Ibrahim Haniyya, chairman of the Arab Journalists Association and editor of *Al Shaab*, said: "We seriously consider this matter as an aggressive measure aimed as we believe at eliminating the existence of the Palestinian press institutions in the occupied territories. This repressive measure comes only two months after the closure of *Al Shiru'* magazine. We in the AJA condemn this measure, which will deprive the Palestinian journalists of their livelihoods. We call on international public opinion to express solidarity with the Palestinian journalists."

Sam'an Khoury, editor of *Al Fajr* Palestinian Weekly, himself held for over a fortnight last autumn, commented: "What can I say. The Israeli authorities exist to harass Palestinians. They live on it."

"Boycott the elections!" Anti-election graffiti on East Jerusalem walls warned would-be voters this week./ST photo

TROOPS GRAB EXHIBITS AT B.U. FESTIVAL

Israeli troops confiscated exhibits from a Palestinian folklore exhibit at Bethlehem University, October 21. Eleven armed Israeli soldiers and policemen entered the Vatican Concert Hall at the university at midnight after showing a search order. They took away posters, printed material, books, cassettes of Palestinian music, a flag and several tear gas cannisters. The exhibition, part of the 'Bethlehem Winter Exhibit of Palestinian Folklore', was organised by the students council. Hundreds visited the show, October 21-23, despite the presence of Israeli road blocks on the first two days.

Festival organisers said the soldiers left more than 90 percent of the exhibits, including embroidery, farm implements, traditional clothes, furniture, cooking utensiles, hand woven baskets, dolls and a Beduin tent.

A statement issued by Bethlehem University said that Israeli action "intrudes on the normal functioning of the university." They said it exemplified the moral dilemma which the military occupation imposes on Israelis, saying some of the soldiers "appeared embarassed" by their tough action.

'Hebronites' Meet Settlers in Hebron

The Israeli-run municipality in Hebron arranged a meeting between a group of Kiryat Arba settlers and local merchants at the municipal building, October 20. The meeting, which was given a great deal of publicity in the Israeli media and hailed as a first step on the road to settler-Hebronite rapprochement, was labelled "unsuccessful" by some of the Arabs who attended it.

The meeting brought together nearly 100 Hebronites and some 40 settlers, according to Israeli and Palestinian attendees. About 50 of the Hebronites, described as "mostly merchants," were invited by the Israeli-appointed mayor of Hebron, Zamir Shemesh. The rest were employees of the municipality.

The ambiguous invitations which were distributed by hand by a municipal employee stated "we seek your presence at the municipality on Thursday, October 20, at 10:00 am for matters relating to the city."

One Arab attendee said that more than 95 percent of those invited attended. They included the head of the chamber of commerce, Ahmad Awaiwi, his deputy Rushdi Raj'i, and Qazem Hassuneh. Burhan Ja'abari, son of the former mayor of Hebron Mohammed Ali Ja'abari and leading Hebron merchant was also there. The settlers were led by the head of the Kiryat Arba council and his deputy.

According to well-informed local sources, the list of those invited was drawn up by Burhan Ja'abari, who is said to have masterminded the meeting with Shemesh.

At the meeting, Ja'abari was the main Arab spokesman, one attendee said. He demanded an end to the settlement process in Hebron, that settlers refrain from carrying weapons when they go down to the city and the cancellation of land closure orders.

The settlers reportedly responded that closed areas could be dissolved if the cases before the Israeli High Court were withdrawn and put before an undefined "Arab-Jewish panel."

Abd al-Mu'ti Sayed, a television salesman who was at the meeting, told *Al Fajr* that the meeting concentrated on "mutual demands and complaints." He said that settlers "wanted us to recognise and acknowledge their status as neighbours." Sayed reported the settlers promised to suspend collective punishment if they were recognised.

Another prominent demand was the removal of the produce market "to another place," according to attendees.

Well-informed national figures say the settlers were probably proposing compensations for merchants who would lose shops in the market, but this could not be confirmed.

Kiryat Arba local council head, who attended with a pistol in his shirt, reportedly told the meeting, "It is for the benefit of all if they do not object to Israeli settlement of Hebron." He warned the attendees that "Jews are stubborn and that they are used to getting what they want by any means possible."

Sayed said he told the settlers, "There is no need to provoke us. You are now living in Hebron forcefully." Referring to the demand for recognition, Sayed said that it is a political issue which he preferred to "leave to Jordan. We are still linked to Jordan, which speaks on our behalf," he stated.

Sayed denied reports in some Israeli newspapers that a 'joint follow-up committee' was established. He insisted that the meeting "fell apart" without any results. He said the proposal to establish a joint committee was raised at the meeting, but was not seriously considered.

The meeting, which some Israeli newspapers described as the beginning of an "Arab-Jewish coexistence," was received with much alarm by Hebron residents. One prominent national figure described it as "the most serious event in recent years." He explained that the meeting aimed at "legalising Israeli settlement through establishing normal relations between the settlers and Hebron residents."

Mustafa Natshe, the acting-mayor of Hebron who was deposed in July, stated that Arab figures who attended the meeting "represent no one but themselves." He added that "all national institutions, including the elected municipal council, denounce the meeting."

The meeting was given wide covereage in Israel. *Yediot Aharanot* quoted the Israeli military governor of Hebron who attended as saying that the meeting represented a "first step towards peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews."

The Jerusalem Post said the meeting indicated the extent to which Shemesh and his superiors had been influenced by the settlers.

A preparatory meeting took place at the military governorate nearly one month ago, according to local reports.

STOP PRESS

Sayed, Mi'ari Freed

Maysara Sayed, from Acre, a senior student at the Technion in Haifa, and lawyer Mohammed Mi'ari from Haifa, member of the Committee in Defence of Palestinian Political Prisoners and an activist in the Committee in Defence of the Land, were released from prison, October 27, and handed town arrest orders for six months.

Sayed and Mi'ari were arrested on October 18, on charges of meeting with PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat during their participation in the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine last month. *(See related story, page 15.)*

Charge Dropped for Peled's PLO Meeting

Matti Peled

The Israeli High Court rejected, October 19, a private petition that Reserve General Mattityahu Peled, the head of the Sheli party, be prosecuted for "offering assistance to the enemy during the war in Lebanon." Israeli lawyer and former Likud MK Yadida Pary filed the complaint, last December, against the Israeli attorney general, Yitzhak Zamir, accusing him of "negligence" for not prosecuting Peled after the general and veteran peace activist participated in a Paris press conference, July 1982, with Issam Sartawi, political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat.

The appeal demanded the attorney general explain his decision. It stated that Peled's offences are liable for punishments of life imprisonment or the death sentence. Representatives of the Israeli justice ministry told the High Court that Zamir has sole authority to file charges.

The court accepted the ministry of justice plea and said they considered Peled's contacts with PLO officials did not violate Israeli law. Judge Yitzhak Cohen ruled that Zamir decided not to try Peled for two reasons: insufficient evidence and that taking Peled to court is not in the public interest.

The High Court then decided to order Pary to pay IS40,000 in court fees.

Mattityahu Peled told *Al Fajr* that the decision of the court is "correct" and that there is no reason or justification for convicting him.

"This attempt," Peled told *Al Fajr*, "reveals an indication of a fascist tendency within Israeli society, which is very dangerous."

Peled described former Knesset Member Pary as a man with "clear fascist tendencies." He said he expected him to pursue similar cases.

ISRÆLI TARGETS HIT IN WB

TEL AVIV — The Israeli *Yediot Aharanot* reported, October 23, that there were several assaults against Israeli targets in the West Bank in the previous week.

Unknown assailants threw fire bombs at Israeli vehicles, one military and the other civilian, in Qalqiliya. No damage was reported.

The paper continued with a report that shots were fired at an Israeli target in Majdal Bani Fadel. Four empty shells of the American-made M-16 machine gun were found at the scene.

In Nablus, stones were thrown at a police car. One stone-thrower was caught after a chase.

Anti-Israel graffiti appeared on walls in Oraba and Ya'abad villages in the Jenin area.

Anti-War Group Holds Prison Demo

About 150 people from *Yesh Gvul* (There Is a Limit) demonstrated outside Prison No. 6, near Haifa, October 22, to protest the imprisonment of war resisters. Demonstrators read out the names of movement members jailed for their refusal to serve in Lebanon.

During the demonstration, *Yesh Gvul* was written in huge fire letters on the hills overlooking the prison. When questioned by the police, demonstrators denied any connection with the blazing slogans. (Translation: Al Hamishmar, October 23, 1983).

Islamic Rioters Exonerated by SIC Inquiry

The committee investigating the clashes between Islamic bloc students and nationalist students, last June 5, issued its findings, October 23, clearing the Muslim students of responsibility for the incident. The Supreme Islamic Council Committee, headed by head of the SIC Sa'ad al-Din al-Alami, blamed the student council and the university administration for the clashes. A BZU student council spokesman called the report "biased and one-sided."

The 57-page report was made public during a one-hour press conference chaired by Skeikh al-Alami at his office in Jerusalem, October 23. It received a hostile reception from the journalists present, some of whom accused the committee of bias. The committee denied bias, but admitted not speaking to anyone from the student council.

According to its report, during the three month investigation testimonies were taken from 44 people in the university and outside. Several students from the Islamic bloc were heard.

The pitched battles on Saturday, June 5 ended after Islamic students, many from the Gaza Strip, had wrecked part of the campus during a march, injured dozens of students and threatened university officials. They were driven off by nationalist students.

The committee declared that the Islamic student march, from which the assault on the campus was made, was "nothing harmful," and said the student representatives and the administration were at fault for not recognising it. Bir Zeit residents were slated for not going to the aid of the Islamic students.

They also blamed the local press, particularly *Al Fajr* and *Al Shira'* magazine (which has since been closed by the Israeli district commissioner of Jerusalem), of "inciting" against the Islamic bloc.

Bir Zeit municipality rejected the committee's allegations against Bir Zeit residents and condemned the committee's report in ads published in local newspapers, October 26. The municipality noted that it will publish a full statement at a later date.

Ghassan Jarrar, member of BZU students council, told *Al Fajr* that the committee was formed without consulting them and that therefore they neither "recognise the committee nor its findings."

"The university conducted its own investigation, reached conclusions and acted upon them," he explained. Another source in the student council accused the committee of excerpting testimonies to slant them in favour of the Islamic bloc.

One senior university administration source told *Al Fajr* that the university prefers not to comment or pursue the case. The clashes of June 5 on campus between nationalist students and Islamic bloc supporters from the university and from the Islamic University of Gaza occurred after Islamic students organised a march from the local mosque in Bir Zeit to the university in which they allegedly chanted slogans against the PLO. The clashes occurred after Islamic students tried to force their way onto campus and attack nationalist students.

Abdallah Sa'afin, head of the Islamic bloc, was expelled from the university for his role in the incident.

The investigating committee, which was set up by the head of the Supreme Islamic Council after the incident, initially consisted of: Hassan Tahboub, director of the Islamic *waqf*; Dr Shafiq Ayash, dean of the religious college in Jerusalem; Hassan al-Qiq, director of the Arab Orphans Institute in Jerusalem; and Dr Sa'adi al-Faqih, head of Bir Zeit University board of trustees. After the ninth session, Dr Faqih resigned from the committee, citing personal reasons. Dr Faqih declined to make any comment to *Al Fajr* on any question relating to the commission. Sources at BZU suggested that he resigned after he discovered that the committee's investigation was "not even-handed."

BZU Foreign Staff Quizzed by Military

Twenty foreign passport holders teaching at Bir Zeit University were summoned to military headquarters at Ramallah, October 23. There they were interviewed individually by an Israeli officer who introduced himself as Captain Amer. They were asked questions about their age and marital status, as well as visa status.

The teachers said they had no idea whether the questioning was routine or part of a wider plan.

Penny Johnson, assistant to the deputy Bir Zeit University public relations director, told *Al Fajr* the teachers were not asked to sign the anti-PLO work permit issued last year.

The last academic year was punctuated by repeated Israeli military attempts to elicit anti-PLO pledges from foreign passport holders employed at West Bank institutions of higher education. Dozens of academics were expelled for their refusal and several others barred from teaching.

CSBZU Activists Aquitted

An Israeli civil court in Jerusalem dismissed charges against five members of the Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University for lack of evidence.

Dani Amit, Oded and Gai Pilavsky, Gila Flint and Yossi Kotem were prosecuted for taking part in a demonstration in 1981. After the state presented its case that the non-violent protest was illegal, defence attorney Avigdor Feldman moved for dismissal on grounds that there was "no case to answer."

The court accepted his plea, ruling that demonstrations which would be "legal in Israel are legal in the West Bank."

In Israel no permit is needed for demonstrations of less than 50 people. A legal expert commented to *Al Fajr*, "It should be remembered that this was an Israeli civil court for Israelis — the decision is unlikely to cut much ice with the military."

Zimbabwe Closes Doors to Israælis

Holders of Israeli passports have been forbidden either to enter or travel through Zimbabwe, in southern Africa, according to Israeli reports. The move follows a visit here by Bishop Abel Muzerewa, black prime minister for the previous white regime, during which he called for Zimbabwe to recognise Israel.

The travel ban ordered by the Zimbabwe Home Affairs minister became effective on October 23. According to the report on the front page of *The Jerusalem Post*, Israeli travel agents immediately stopped selling tickets to Israeli passport holders for trips to or through Zimbabwe.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe told reporters in the capital Harare that relations were being reduced, "First because of Israeli policies towards Palestinians and secondly because of the military and economic cooperation between Israel and white-ruled South Africa."

A number of Zimbabwe nationals here on temporary visas during religious studies in an East Jerusalem seminary rushed to Israeli interior ministry offices to get them renewed. An official at the seminary who refused to be quoted expressed fear that the Israeli government might plan retaliatory actions against Zimbabwe nationals.

Earlier, Abel Muzarewa, who was studying in East Jerusalem until last week, had given interviews to the Israeli media, calling on Zimbabwe to recognise Israel diplomatically. Mugabe attacked the bishop, saying he was planning with Israel to destabilise the country.

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Lebanon and Grenada in the Same Boat

The death of US Marines in Beirut and Grenada is part of the price the American people must pay for the adventurist policies of its cowboy president Ronald Reagan. The price the rest of us are paying is much heavier.

The US has no idea who hit its troops in the Lebanese capital, yet its media is flooded with unfounded accusations against its prime 'bogey-men' – Iran and Syria. Israel is urging focus on the latter, and some Washington 'experts' see the Soviets as ultimately responsible. The natural shock and anger of ordinary Americans was channelled quickly away from the place the true responsibility lies – the White House.

A few days later the small Caribbean island of Grenada was invaded by another unit of these same Marines. This act is quite patently illegal – and this in the words of leaders of Western European countries, not just the third world states who are the primary victims of this stage of the American leader's anti-communist righteousness. The Americans who voted the ex-film star into office have a responsibility to get rid of him.

Bloody repression and possibly years of subjugation await the Grenadians for having the timerity to throw their weight behind the socialist government of Maurice Bishop, which bettered their living conditions and provided fundamental social services, yet aroused the wrath of Washington. There is no doubt they will fight back.

In Lebanon, French and US frontline armies, navies and air forces are playing prominent roles in propping up the ailing Phalangist regime of Amin Gemayel. All of them have blood on their hands, and no amount of sanctimonious posturing will hide that fact. All of them should get out – either of the country or of office.

The 'solution' in Lebanon is not some fictitious, and no doubt bloody, retribution against the 'enemy of the moment'. The Lebanese – like the Grenadians and the Palestinians – want justice and a chance to live their lives free of exploitation and oppression. The US is seen by all as the enemy of these goals.

The people of the US may buy Reagan's lines about the US's international role and be willing to pay their small price in blood. On a wider scale, Reagan seems determined to force nuclear confrontation with the USSR. The holocaust that would follow such a war will not discriminate between white and black, or take into account gross national products. Americans have an international responsibility to stop this madness now.

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The American Mood

by Ghassan Bishara Our Washington DC Correspondent

Americans woke up, October 23, to the news of the bombing of Marine headquarters in Beirut and at a base of the French contingent in the multinational forces (MNF). Over the next few days the news concentrated on updating the accounts of the Marine casualties, which rose steadily to the 200-plus mark, and analyses of the circumstances surrounding the event.

This blow, coming as it did a few months after a similar attack on the US Embassy in Beirut, caused the highest number of American military casualties since the end of the Vietnam war. People in the streets of Washington, interviewed by local radio news stations, have by and large expressed the view that the Marines should simply come back home.

Some members of Congress apparently think the same. Sunday is usually a day, in the US, on which the three major networks have news programmes. A theme has emerged from today's interviews on all three networks. Administration officials, such as Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger and others, followed President Ronald Reagan's lead, given on his return from a golfing weekend in Augusta, Georgia, to the effect that the US commitment to its objectives in Lebanon will continue. Reagan, of course, expressed shock at the attack itself and very harshly condemned the forces behind it.

Members of Congress, on the other hand, who only two weeks ago granted Reagan his wish to keep the Marines in Beirut for 18 more months, became now critical of what many called "no policy" in Lebanon. Such members of the Senate as Sam Nunn, a Democrat from Georgia, member of the Armed Services Committee, and Charles Mathias, a Maryland Republican and member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, both argued that there is no policy to govern the Marines in Beirut. These members and others said that they "don't know what it is the Marines are trying to achieve in Lebanon." They rejected the argument that the role of the MNF is to maintain peace, since, they said, there was "no peace there to start with."

They also rejected the idea that the MNF is there to help Lebanon gain sovereignty over its territory through the Amin Gemayel government, since, they argued, siding with Gemayel is precisely what made the US and French troops, in particular, targets of the continued attacks on them.

Who Is to Blame?

Prime targets for having responsibility assigned to them by the US are the Iranian-supported Shi'ites in Lebanon, pro-Syrian forces, backed by the Soviet Union, and the Palestinians. Highest on the list, however, are the Iranian sympathisers.

Caspar Weinberger on CBS TV and then on ABC, said that circumstantial evidence points to those who carried out the US Embassy bombing earlier this year. Answering questions, he said these are either directed by the Iranian government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, or simply his allies in Lebanon. Weinberger defended the lax security at the Marine headquarters, which apparently permitted a driver to run his 900 kilo load of explosives through the Marine guards into the lobby of the building in which Marines were still asleep. "It is hard to stop people on a kamakazi-like mission," Weinberger added.

Others, depending on their political affiliations, have placed blame on Syria or the PLO. Such commentators and members of Congress politicise issues that many Americans view as national tragedies. Such individuals with sympathy for Israel would like to shift the focus to either the PLO or Syria, despite the fact that officials have not done so for lack of evidence.

Attention is now shifting to means of protecting the remaining Marines in Beirut. Reagan, who came back to Washington early Sunday, has called for an urgent meeting of the National Security Council to review the situation in Lebanon, and provide new options to safeguard Marines in Beirut, while not weakening US commitments to Lebanon.

The options being formulated, according to available information, do not include withdrawal. This was stated clearly by Reagan on landing in Washington. They also exclude increasing or decreasing the US contingent in the MNF. What is being contemplated is either removal of the Marines from the airport, which is flat and unprotected, or allowing them to expand the "buffer zone" in which they are stationed minimising the chances of another attack. Another option mentioned by Weinberger, though not as binding, was removal of Marines from Beirut to American ships, where they will definitely be better protected.

Others were hawkish. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, for example, said the administration must properly define American Marines' role in Beirut and possibly even increase their numbers in order to improve the American and Lebanese balance of forces versus "Syria, Palestine and their Soviet allies." The best way, Kissinger believes, to improve the balance of forces in Lebanon "and the Middle East as a whole is to reconstruct and strengthen the American-Israeli alliance." Kissinger hinted at this option, through which he thinks the Syrian Army will be physically pushed out of Lebanon by Israel with American help. When this is achieved, Kissinger went on, the PLO forces will leave as will the Israelis and the Lebanese government will gain sovereignty over its territory.

This option will probably be most actively considered as it had support in Washington even before the attacks. George Will, a journalist on ABC who could not help hiding his sympathy for Israel, supported Kissinger's argument. Sam Donaldson, White House correspondent for the same network, said disapprovingly that it was Israel's invasion in the first place and its redeployment a few weeks ago which got the US troops where they are. Following the PLO's departure from Beirut, in accordance with former US special envoy to the Middle East Philip Habib's agreement, which also was supposed to have prohibited the Israeli Army from entering West Beirut, the MNF withdrew from Lebanon altogether, it should be kept in mind. It was the Israeli Army-sponsored massacre at Sabra and Shatila which brought the MNF back into West Beirut. It is also a fact that despite the American government's appeals to Israel not to redeploy its forces to the Awali River, Israel's determination to do so is the cause for the latest fighting in Lebanon and whatever followed.

OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

Earthquake at Al-Zib

by Thoma Shick

Not only a smile . . .

I was lying on my sleeping bag, as were many others around me, under a huge, obviously very old fig tree, and the musicians and singers were making the most beautiful modern noise. Thousands of youths were pleased and cheering every singer who appeared and every song they knew in advance. They joined in with the singers, danced, chatted and shouted at the same time. Between singers from time to time the MC reminded the audience that the evening was dedicated to *Yesh Gvul* and that the slogan of the evening was "Take the Soldiers out of Lebanon." "We don't call for a refusal to serve in the army," was the explanatory apology along with a statement of praise for "those soldiers who were prepared to serve in military prison but not against their conscience in Lebanon." The money collected from the tickets for the performance will carry on *Yesh Gvul* activities and support families of imprisoned soldiers, since the National Insurance does not pay them anything.

As I was lying there on freshly cut, green grass, I felt from time to time as if a beat or twist or crack had moved the solid soil beneath my body. Was it the power of the electronic sound from the high-powered amplifiers that moved the earth? Was it a sudden earthquake, or maybe underground nuclear tests taking place somewhere in the immediate vicinity or some distant neighbourhood? I'm quite sure it was only my imagination that made the earth a living soul, beating from beneath, lying on the grass that covers the ground, that covers the . . .

I was thinking:

"What do you have in your heads now? The names of the singers and the bands, one by one, the whole list of songs, melodies, words, "high"... All this on behalf and for the sake of "There is a Limit." A short distance from the Lebanese border — not far away and not a border anymore — are the refugees. Yes. "Don't send us to Lebanon!" Are you demanding this, or only listening to the music?!

"Is it alright to come here? To have a good time with a friend on the grass? Where?...On the ruins of al-Zib, since the late '40s covered by red soil so the grass will grow nicer on the rocky ground of fallen houses. (One might wonder how beautifully the site is shaped to make the park so hilly . . .). And what will happen tomorrow? Will you at least sign up with "There is a Limit"? And when the order comes and they send you? And they *will* send you! What then?

"As long as people wear the uniforms, go on and bear the guns, there will be orders and trials . . . The "partials" (participants or resisters, like a half-full and half-empty glass of water . . .) will prepare the instruments and bring them, and those who are prepared for everything will get them at the border, even if there is a limit."

They called the performance *Gvul*-stop, a sound similar to Woodstock. But it wasn't. A deeper feeling, a deeper atmosphere, was missing. It was due first of all to the crowd, which came mostly for the external effect, not for the protest or the support — the deeper feeling of the cause. The strongest applause was for the most famous singers. The most famous songs — however banal and irrelevant their lyrics — were the issue of the night. Those that were relevant were also cheered, but the difference was detectable by a certain fraction of the audience.

Some of the singers, in advance, were threatened with job dismissals for participating in this performance, which all did voluntarily. The Israel Army radio was one of those that issued threats. The singers didn't give in, knowing that their fame and public admiration is necessary for those factors making threats. And they will continue to go for other performances too. Maybe in the Lebanon, who knows?

There was a heavy contingent of policemen, policewomen and border police in trucks and jeeps; heavily armed troops walking around and among the crowds. I was lying under the big fig tree from before '48, my eyes closed to hear the music better, then I looked to see who had stepped on my legs. . . two heavy soldiers were above me. They didn't mean it. They were on duty in the noise and darkness. . . Nobody apologised, the darkness and the crowd and the noise were so understandable. . .

The audience was screened by electronic devices at the entrance, which made the entrance slow and delayed the opening of the performances. The very existence of the many uniformed men created tension and anger among the audience. There was no bad will involved, of course. The police were there to defend the audience from 'Herut Youth' who did everything possible so that the event would not take place. Even the "Nature Preservation Authorities" responsible for the site tried to cancel it altogether by opposing the use of the place. This was counter-acted by an appeal to the High Court of Justice.

From time to time a police siren interrupted the music. Just "for fun," or to make way through the crowd at the entrance for a police van. The performance was short, relatively. A show till early morning was promised but it ended at 11:00 pm. Twenty thousand people left the grounds in an hour, leaving behind the organisers and others who listened to music from records and cassettes. Darkness covered everything.

Morning came early. Light on the scene, like after a battle with nightmares. The stage was still there, to be taken apart by *Yesh Gvul* people. Behind it was a beautiful building. . . a mosque. . . al-Zib Mosque, a "holy place" that should be maintained. . . and those holy dwellings of those holy people who are not far from here? And the grass on the hilly park with the red soil that was transported to here. . . ruins, apathy, surface interests, surface slogans, police, police, police.

. . . *With a smile.*
—Thoma

The War at Home

by Thoma Shick

Individuals of conscience among the Israeli Jewish population continue in various ways to relate to the unfinished war in Lebanon. Letters to the editors of newspapers reflect this in which the continued activities, statements and historical backgrounds of those figures who got involved in the start of the war and its continuation are discussed in a comparative manner.

Human suffering is the focus of the contributors; suffering that has touched many individuals and families on both sides of the border and firing lines. The nature of Zionism, the central ideology of the state of Israel, is represented in various ways in this selected collection of letters to the editors.

The Silence for the Mentally Injured

"As a reserve soldier, I participated in the conquest of Sidon in June, 1982. This battle, although there were no killed or wounded in my unit, afflicted soldiers who have remained anonymous to this very date.

"The dead were buried with gun salutes; those in wheelchairs and those who could walk with sticks, lacking limbs, all these were granted aid and recognition. However, the mentally afflicted seem to have earned only silence.

"There are two categories of those affected: the officially shell-shocked, who resorted to treatment; and tens of thousands of others whose ways of life have changed, even if they seem to be functioning normally.

"As in every war, this last one also caused suffering to its participants. But it seems that the war in Lebanon, with the background of civilian houses being bombarded and with the reasons for it clearly discredited, caused a wave of psychological responses.

"I wish to warn against the stupidity that is embodied in keeping our mouths closed about the mentally afflicted, who are neither wounded nor dead — those who abandoned their routine, their faith, and some their jobs, family, or studies."

R. Giv'oni,
Tel Aviv
(Halr 23.9.83)

A Litigent's Confession

"Four Israeli newspapers (three Hebrew and one English) published in the past few weeks the story of two Jewish national leaders who, during World War II, offered Hitler's Germany the services of the organisation they led with the explicit argument: "*We are equal to you in our opinions, there is no difference.*" These two personalities were Avraham Stern and Yitzhak Yezernitzky (Shamir) from *Lehi* (Israel's Freedom Fighters). This story has not been denied by anyone, neither in whole nor in part.

"Today, 'Yair' (Stern) has become a national hero and of saintly memory, whose portrait is affixed to a postage stamp in the Jews' state; and 'Yitzhak Shamir' is going to be appointed as prime minister in the Jews' state. Did our late sages direct their words towards contacts between "national" Jews and Nazi Germans when saying: "Not for nothing did the starling go with the raven , it is of its kind."

(Prof.) Yesha'ayahu Leibowitz,
Jerusalem
(HaAretz, 25.9.83)

Our Righteous Man in Sodoma

"It has been shown that finally we have one righteous man who cries out against the massacre in Lebanon and is also prepared to go there himself to save the remaining souls — Ariel Sharon, who stood alone at the breach and led Israel's people to a glorious victory that dispersed and annihilated the PLO, established a new system in Lebanon; purified it of Palestinians and Syrians and pushed the Soviets once and for all out of the Middle East.

"Ariel Sharon, the shooting star in the Jews' heaven on earth, whose spirit was broken when the (Kahan) inquiry commission was established and its conclusions brought them to edge of an abyss — but whose faith in a free and democratic Israel returned to them and was strengthened only thanks to his strong spirit.

"It's a pity we didn't know this a year ago. Arik would have been a brilliant speaker at the demonstrations that demanded the establishment of an investigation commission into his personal responsibility for the Sabra and Shatila massacre. Perhaps he will be given another opportunity when an investigation committee on the whole war in Lebanon is established."

Amiram Goldblum,
Jerusalem
(Peace Now spokesperson)
(HaAretz 25.9.83)

UNRWA on the Line

The United Nations Relief Works Agency was the international community's response to the plight of a people it helped to dispossess. As the years have gone by, popular resentment against UNRWA and its methods for the people it is supposed to serve has escalated. In a recent interview with *Al Fajr's* Sami Aboudi John McAndrew, deputy director of UNRWA operations in Gaza, fielded questions on some of the latest controversies.

A view over Beach camp in Gaza, where Israeli authorities demolished 20 houses last month under the pretext they were on 'government property'. Says McAndrew: *"Unfortunately, we cannot give victims of security measures any aid."*

Q: Can you describe the areas of services provided by UNRWA?

A: UNRWA provides services in three fields, the biggest of which is education, which makes up more than 65 percent of the Agency's operations. Health consumes between 20 and 22 percent of the budget, while relief services absorb about 10 percent. The remaining three percent of the budget is used for administrative expenditures.

Q: Does the budget include funds for new projects?

A: Our budget is restricted to operating existing facilities, and maintaining present services. Development budgets are allocated by the main headquarters in Vienna on separate requests for each project.

Q: It is well-known in the West Bank and Gaza that UNRWA employees receive better salaries than government employees in the same field. Can you tell us how salaries are determined?

A: The policy of the Agency is to be a good employer and to guarantee the employees a decent living. Salaries are determined on the basis of surveys conducted by the International Civil Service Commission (which is part of the UN). The commission sends experts out to survey local salary conditions. Since no field studies are conducted in Gaza, salaries are equated with the West Bank.

Q: What problems confront your operations?

A: Money is the biggest problem. We always operate under a tight budget. So far we have succeeded in maintaining adequate services; however, our facilities need improvement.

Q: Are there any restrictions from the Israeli military governorate? Could you discuss your relations with the military governorate?

A: Differences arise from time to time over particular projects. As long as we operate under the military authorities, differences are inevitable.

Conflicts usually occur over construction projects. For instance, for many years we had been seeking funds to build a school in Fakhari, midway between Khan Yunis and Rafah. When we got the money, nearly two years ago, the authorities stopped the project. Eventually they built one.

Among other problems is the applicability of certain laws passed under Egypt. We maintain, for instance, we should not have to get permits to build in camps. They, however, have been stressing the requirement to coordinate activities with them.

Q: When did they begin this requirement?

A: About two years ago. In particular, after the establishment of the 'civil administration'.

Q: What about security? Is there a mutually understood definition between UNRWA and the Israeli military authorities of security?

A: UNRWA's activities do not supersede security measures which the military authorities implement. When travel restrictions are imposed, UNRWA staff are also banned from getting to their work places. The situation is the same when an area is placed under curfew, where, except for a minimum of clinical staff, we cannot provide our services.

With regard to construction in a security area, we are also restricted. We are not allowed to build near the sea shore, which is regarded as a security zone. In Deir al-Balah, for example, we intended to tear down the deteriorating youth centre, but the authorities prevented us. This is due to the construction of a new security road which they are building near the youth centre, on the coast.

Q: Several months ago, the Israeli authorities demolished more than 20 houses in Shate' (Beach) Camp and notified nearly 40 families to evacuate their homes on the pretext that the houses are on government property. What have you done to assist those people?

A: Unfortunately, we cannot give victims of security measures any aid. We neither have the money nor the land to give to these people. There is nothing we can do. We protest to the military authorities and demand that they provide alternative shelters, but we cannot force them to do so.

Q: There have been complaints this year of a shortage of textbooks. Can you explain the reasons for this?

A: As you may know, we import textbooks from Egypt, in order to maintain the same curriculum as that of Egypt. Each book has to be cleared by UNESCO standards and the Israeli censor. There is no problem as far as UNESCO is concerned. The Israeli censor, however, is a slow process. If the censor objects to a phrase or a paragraph, we cannot bring the book in. This situation was exploited by some private people who reprint the books here after omitting the phrases objected to by the censor, which constitutes a violation of international copyright law.

Q: During recent visits to refugee camps, people complained that students are compelled to pay for repairs in their own school buildings.

A: When schools have been damaged during demonstrations or periods of disorder, the Agency has followed a policy that this damage should be repaired at the expense of the students. This is mainly because the damage is caused by our students.

Anyhow, the money collected can be regarded as something like a tax collected to improve schools.

Health

Q: What problems do you face with regard to the health system in Gaza?

A: Until recently, we had a problem with disposal of garbage. Last June, the Israeli authorities closed down our garbage disposal station in order to give way for the expansion of Beit Lahia housing project. They told us to use the Gaza municipal station. When we applied to the municipality, which is run by the interior department (a branch of the military governorate), they turned us down. They later agreed to allow us to use the disposal in exchange for a certain fee.

Q: Some people in the Gaza area camps complained that if they come to a clinic after 12:00 noon, they do not find a doctor to treat them. They also complain that many kinds of medicine are not available in UNRWA clinics.

A: We do not provide full medical services. We only give preventative medicine.

As for the clinic hours, they are supposed to operate with a full staff between 7:00 am and 1:45 pm. We welcome residents to report any violation of these regulations.

Q: Local papers recently reported that the Israeli water company, Mekorot, has extended its jurisdiction to the camps of the central region (Bureij, Mughazi and Nusseirat) and took over the services from UNRWA.

A: In recent years, the governments of every country where we provide services have been taking over responsibility to supply water and electricity to refugee camps.

Recently, the authorities decided to have an integrated water system in Gaza. For this they persuaded people to connect to government water, which is better and more efficient. In the past we used to pump three to four hours a day. Now they will have better quality water all day.

Q: But why did people agree to forfeit a free water system in favour of a costly one?

A: Through arm-twisting. Moreover, the government water project offers longer (hours of) service and better water quality.

In exchange for turning over our water wells to the authorities, we insisted that they provide water to special hardship cases free of charge. This includes (a minimum of) 20 litres per person per day (for special cases).

Intervention by the Israeli authorities in garbage and sewage disposal systems has caused problems for UNRWA directors -- and also, of course, for children playing in the streets/POP photo.

Q: Can you tell us something about resettlement projects in the Gaza Strip?

A: The government has established a number of housing projects where refugees can obtain land in exchange for their shelter in the camp. As far as we are concerned, the fact that they move to housing projects does not affect their status. We continue to provide services as usual. We neither encourage nor discourage the project.

Q: But people who moved to resettlement camps say there are no UNRWA facilities.

A: We have no inclination nor the resources to build new facilities. People, however, can still use the facilities in the camp they moved out of.

Q: Some people are suspicious of the gradual reduction in services by the UN agency. They fear that this reduction is made to facilitate the Israeli authorities' scheme to resettle Palestinian refugees and hence politically eliminate their special and temporary status.

A: For many years the Agency has been obliged to reduce to some extent its services for financial reasons. While we had to economise on a number of services, I can say that health services have improved over the years. It is, however, true that there has been reduction and later cancellation of food rations. In the 1950s, the Agency stopped building new shelters or schools.

GOD, ISRAEL AND MRS LEVINGER

by Pierre Tartakowsky

The armed attack on Hebron University and the repression of demonstrations evoke the violence of Israeli settlement. Constructed on one side of Hebron, the settlement of Kiryat Arba has a disturbing reputation. But there one meets people forced into public relations, and concerned about their image. Those who have settled Hebron's centre, less pestered, more easily reveal their true nature. Among them is Mrs Levinger, wife of the rabbi of Kiryat Arba and the town's preeminent settler. An encounter a little surreal...

The road is blocked. Merchandise is scattered on the ground for "reasons of security" and the desolation which rules contrasts with the life in the *souq*, close by.

There was a time when these homes did belong to Jews. It did not take much to confiscate and fortify them, one after the other: sentry-boxes at the entrance, empty gun cartridges on the roofs, observation towers all around... At the guard post I recount my story: French journalist. Could I meet Mrs Levinger? A soldier leaves to inquire and returns. It's alright and I enter. "Wait here," I am told as I am lead to the library. I wait and take advantage of the time to familiarise myself. Mrs Levinger is the wife of the rabbi of Kiryat Arba, the spiritual and political leader of a colony which is the symbol of the most extreme religious fanaticism. Directed by the Gush Emunim, a sort of Ku Klux Klan known for involvement in fascist assaults, Kiryat Arba profits from solid political links to the heart of the government. Here they have discovered bombs identical to those which cost Bassam Shaka'a (1) his legs, and recently its settlers have launched a punitive campaign against the town: 150 vehicles burned, shots aimed at residents... Religious, but not choirboys. Which is to say Mrs Levinger's "shalom" kept me on guard.

Scarf tightly fit around pulled back hair, eyes blue and cold, she personifies authority. Body straight, she stiffens to say, "I am listening to you." Hands crossed, they part readily to halt a remark, to drive back an objection. Objections she forestalls, moreover, only to deepen the shortcomings of her arguments. One after another, she adds anecdotes, riddles, quotes from the Bible and contemporary literature. I managed to isolate three themes: the settlers' presence, violence, the future... "Hebron is a sacred town for us. We have come back to it. See all these books? They are testimonies of the diaspora and each mentions the return. The Jews were scattered but Israel never left their lips." And she recites: Should I forget-thee, O Jerusalem, may my tongue fall out and my right hand shrivel in the sun. "You French," she continues, "understand nothing of this situation, you are all pro-Arab." I let slip with a light protest, quickly extinguished by a forceful comeback. "Perhaps Alsace-Lorraine will make you understand. If the Germans occupied these two provinces for a thousand years, would they be German?" Who's to say? I wanted to suggest that 1000 years is a long time and that under these conditions, unfortunately... well no, precisely. "More than 2000 years ago God said to us: This land is yours. Time is irrelevant."

And what of the Palestinians who've lived here in the meantime? Madame Levinger reflects and recoils: "You must understand that we, the Jews, do not believe in conversion and do not practice mixed marriage." I speculate without really following the connection. "We do not intermix and because of this fact, we have remained a religious and national body, one and all. Whereas the geneology of this people, the Arabs, is not certain. They believe in conversion through the holy war. They are everywhere, as far as Indonesia, without anyone knowing for sure where they come from... these people are a confused mixture of polyglot tribes, among whom some were definitely nomads..." I see. I get my breath back: Isn't the systematic confiscation of land incompatible with a state of peace?

Her hands move, agitated: "There is no confiscation. The land is bought, involving more laws than anywhere else in the world (2), at times on demand. One must beware of what the Arabs say. They allege that we have taken their homes. They have countless tales to tell..." What of the bombs found in Kiryat Arba, tales as well? "Listen, I don't know if you are intelligent enough to understand what I have to tell you; you come here, you see armed Israelis, you have made a story of this, but you have never seen a terrorist! Do you realise we are surrounded by more that 70,000 Arabs?... Are you Jewish?" The question doesn't surprise me anymore and I answer yes, as usual, convinced it's the wisest. But Mrs. Levinger wants to known the truth. "Your mother is Jewish?" Again I say yes, to her relief: "Then you will understand what I have to say. Do you know how many Jews have died this year? No? Eight. Do you know how many Arabs have died this year? No? Zero. Well then?" Well, I am taken aback. A Palestinian peasant just died of a bullet to the head, not a daily occurrence but such periodic deaths add up. But Mrs. Levinger goes on: "Even the young Arabs, those at the university, want to throw us into the sea! Do you know they are armed? That they have cases of guns, hundreds of bombs." This is the Apocalypse.

Let's remain on the level of religion: in 1967 a small section of the great mosque in Hebron was changed into a synagogue. This year, I saw only a small part reserved for Muslims. Won't this complicate the future? "Islam followed Judaism by 2700 years. These people have lambasted my religion and you want sympathy? Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are buried in this synagogue: for them they are prophets. For me they are fathers." Does she believe such power will survive permanent war? "Everytime we have shown our good will, the Arabs attack us. I say, then, we are joking no more: no more compromise, no more partition, nothing." What of peace? "We have no contention with the Arabs, it's the terrorists. When PLO incitement ceases, the Arabs will calm themselves. And we will impose peace with settlements. Settlement is the common way to peace. We have settled the Galilee, the Negev, Haifa; we will do the same in Judea and Samaria. The Arabs who want to stay may, to serve us, without ever forgetting that we were here first and that God gave us this land."I shake my head in disbelief. "By God! There is proof: Do you know that Israel is the only place in the world where the Jewish population can thrive? My husband the rabbi told me, for example, that in Denver, Colorado, 90 percent of the Jewish population has been assimilated. In a few years there will be no Jews over there. The land of the Jews is here; and I plead with you because you, in France, will one day awake to be surrounded by anti-Semites, relatives, friends, all of them... The Arabs hate us? Big deal! I add them to the long list of those who hate us! No one ever liked us! But we are in the hands of God. The victory of 600,000 Jews over 250 million Arabs is His victory, a sign, proof that this land is ours. And we will keep it because we have a state, an army and we are strong. Do you know what will happen if we lose a war? That's why we must remain the strongest, forever."

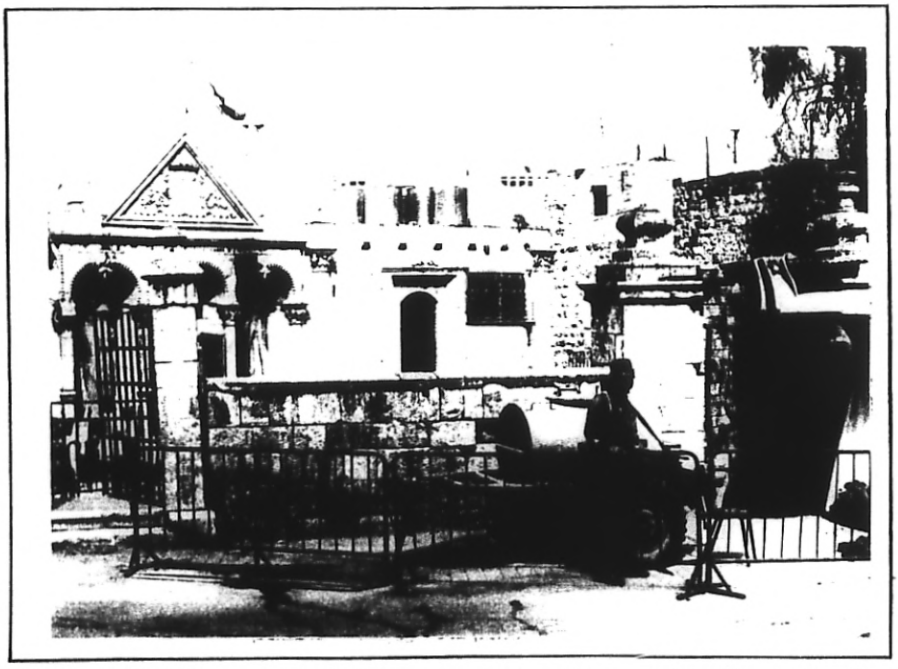
"GUSH EMUNIM AND KIRYAT ARBA ARE SYMBOLS OF THE MOST EXTREME RELIGIOUS FANATICISM – RELIGIOUS, BUT THESE AREN'T CHOIRBOYS. WHICH IS TO SAY, MRS LEVINGER'S 'SHALOM' KEPT ME ON GUARD."

Well then, one final question: the Karp Commission was established in Israel to inquire about crimes committed by the settlers. Yehudit Karp, who presided over it, handed a report to the Justice Ministry. Everyone knows that this report is devastating, even if the ministry refuses to publish it for reasons of "applicability." What does Mrs Levinger think of the Karp Commission? "I am ignorant of what she speaks of. I, have, therefore no opinion."(Translated from the French weekly Revolution)

* * * * *

(1) The deposed mayor of Nablus.

(2) The Israelis make use of three systems of law in the West Bank: Israeli, Jordanian and that which dates from the British Mandate. Despite this, in order to seize land the Israelis continue to commit illegal acts. A kind of record breaker...



The Dabboyya building in Hebron, occupied by Mrs. Levinger and company since 1980, because, as she says, *"Time is irrelevant."*

The city of Hebron has been targetted by the more extreme fringes of the Israeli government and settlement movement since shortly after 1967. *HaAretz* West Bank reporter **Zvi Barel** describes the machinations of settlers, the military establishment, politicians and appointed officials in their latest move to put the heart of the city under settler control.

CAPTURING HEBRON CENTRE IN AN ELEGANT WAY

It was as if some scholars had gathered and stood on the threshold of a secret set-up of tricks to carry out their conspiracy. This is the way in which Defence Minister Moshe Arens, Rabbi Levinger, some of the heads of the Tehiya movement, the appointed mayor of Hebron Zamir Shemesh and some of the officials of the 'civil administration' feel this week.

The conspiracy was woven a long time ago, and when it was born few people believed that it would be carried out. But bulldozers, such as Levinger and his friends, are not blocked by laws and regulations. Perhaps this week the limits of law became clear, and Levinger can now announce that the Jewish quarter in Hebron is in his hands.

On the eve of the *succot* feast, two long trailers were brought into Hebron on big lorries. The curiosity of the surprised residents was quickly satisfied. Slowly the lorries progressed in the direction of the so-called 'Beit Romano' (Usama Ben Munqeth School) and parked in its yard.

Two manifestations of the Israeli government succumbing to settler pressure: top — the Hebron Municipality with a Hebrew sign as a recent addition/JN photo; below — the Ibrahimi Mosque, or 'Avraham Avinu Synagogue' as settlers call it/JS photo.

'Beit Romano' was a school for 700 pupils until 1981. In the summer of that year a settler was stabbed. For the settlers, this was an excellent incident. The intermediaries of the Jewish quarter approached the army and security officers and convinced them that the place constituted a danger to settlers and that there was a need to replace the pupils with army forces.

At that time the plan of 'Occupying Beit Romano', which constitutes the northern edge of the quarter, was crystalised. The idea was that with the passage of time the security need would be forgotten and Israeli settlers would live in the place of the soldiers. Apparently, those who hold this idea take the Dabboyya building and its neighbouring houses as precedent. Also in this case, the army was used as a tool to clear the way for the settlers.

Regarding the issue of 'Beit Romano' the army was not a disappointment. It played its role to the hilt. To the duties imposed on reserve soldiers who served in Lebanon, a new task was added: guard duty and observation at 'Beit Romano'.

In Kiryat Arba and the Jewish quarter, in the meantime, the first nucleus of settlers was prepared to populate the building after a decision to 'kick out' the soldiers. So there was no other option for Hebron's municipality but to find an alternative place for the hundreds of pupils, most of whom began to study in a second shift in other schools.

Less than a year has passed since the Israeli Army entered 'Beit Romano' as the first settlers are ready to enter it. The settler families took over the classrooms and set up a religious school there. Army sources then said, "The security need still exists and the setting up of the yeshiva adds to the strength of security of the position."

But the 'national pride' of the settlers does not allow them to stand on the threshold in the shadow of the army. The army is a means to an end and it is not 'in character' for them that such a body should serve as legal cover for the presence of the settlers in the town of their forefathers. Therefore, there was heavy pressure on the defence minister to formally hand over the building to the authorities of the settlers. Through the help of Knesset members from the Tehiya movement and the cynical use of incidents such as the killing of Aharon Gross (on July 7), Rabbi Levinger and his group convinced the government minister that as long as 'Beit Romano' enjoyed the protection of 'security need', yeshiva rules could be undermined. Consequently, there had to be a legal transfer of the building to their hands. They see this as proper compensation for "a part of the harm caused by Arabs to Jews."

The minister was convinced, and the task of transferring the building was easy after the disbanding of the Hebron municipality and the appointment of Zamir Shemesh as its mayor. Until his appointment he was the appointed custodian of absentee property in Hebron.

Two weeks ago, in honour of the (Jewish) New Year, a decision was dictated to Zamir Shemesh according to which the municipality — which is the legal holder of the building it rented 30 years ago from the Jordanian custodian — gave up the building; from the municipality's point of view, after its seizure by the army, it no longer needs it anymore. This dictated decision in fact cleared the legal way for the transfer of 'Beit Romano' to the hands of the settlers. Army sources who were asked at the end of the week who permitted the trailers at 'Beit Romano' said: "The defence minister permitted taking the trailers to the school yard, which legally now belongs to the settlers."

"How is it legal?"

"It is legal because it was purchased from the owners."

"From the owners? That is, it did not belong to Jews?"

"No, no. Money was given to the owners."

"But the Hebron municipality owned it?"

"Right, money was paid to the Hebron municipality in order to build a school."

But nobody in Hebron knows about a budget to build a school, other than what was allocated in the framework of the regular plan, and the students continue to study in the second shift. This legal transfer was possible because the mayor who was appointed for Hebron municipality is Israeli, and it would not be possible for an Israeli to sit in the Hebron municipality without dissolving it through the 'civil administration'; likewise, the dissolution would not have happened without pressure by the settlers on the defence minister.

Maybe this is not enough. It comes out that when there is an Israeli mayor it is possible to create miracles and incredible wonders in order to glorify the Jewish settlement in Hebron. About six months ago, Hebron municipality appealed to the Israeli High Court demanding the army prevent settlers from working in the area of 'Avraham Avinu Synagogue'.

Among other things, the appeal said settlers destroyed houses belonging to Arabs and that the trailers in which they live are not authorised by the municipality as the law requires. The High Court complied with the demands of the municipality and issued a banning order against continued work until the matter was clarified. At this point, the municipality was disbanded and the handling of the matter was passed to the appointed Israeli mayor.

At the beginning there were hesitations, whether to defy the appeal or to let the High Court do its job. But the settlers did not leave it in the hands of blind coincidence. They pressured the defence minister to cancel the court's decision which hinders the reconstruction of the quarter.

Maybe, a few days ago, the law got a new twist. The appointed mayor sent a letter to the legal advisor of the municipality — who had sent the initial appeal — telling him the municipality had decided to issue permits for the trailers. Regarding the destruction of houses, there was a demand that the police investigate the incident and that it even complete its investigation so that there will be no need to follow up the appeal. The lawyer, apparently, will not have an option and he will be forced to cancel the appeal.

Thus everything is correct. Everything is legal. No one can come up with claims. The law and justice are maybe suffering, but what have they to do with the revival of settlement in Hebron? And the style — already the difference in style between the current defence minister and his predecessor has been mentioned. The elegance in which the current occupation of the quarter is being executed captures the heart. It is possible to continue with it. Before us there are a bus station and a vegetable market. With one or two more signatures by the appointed mayor, these two places will also be in our hands. Then it will be possible finally to appoint an Arab mayor. (Translation: HaAretz, September 26, 1983).

LAW AND JUSTICE MAY BE SUFFERING, BUT WHAT HAVE THEY TO DO WITH REVIVAL OF SETTLEMENT IN HEBRON?

CAWL SPOKESMAN SPIRO ADDRESSES CONFERENCE ON PALESTINE

"The Israeli Government Worships Power"

Gideon Spiro, recently appointed spokesman of the Committee Against the War in Lebanon and the Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, has been active in left and liberal circles for many years. He was a founder of the *Yesh* group in Haifa University in the early '70s – the prerunner of the leftist student blocs in Israel. Below, Spiro's statement to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, August 29 – September 7, 1983.

The Israeli government is not represented at this conference, and there is a good reason for this absence. It is almost impossible to defend the policy of the Israeli government. There is a well-known Jewish proverb which says, "Don't do to others what you would not like them to do to you."

This proverb has been forgotten by all Israeli governments, especially the present one, which has consistently treated the Palestinians, both in deed and word, in a manner which would indeed be greatly disliked by Israelis were it applied to them.

Israel believes that a denial of basic human and national rights to a people is a recipe for solving that people's problems. The Israeli government worships power. It believes that with an army and weapons it is possible to break the spirit of a people and to dictate its own policies to neighbouring countries.

It is in this context that we must see the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Israel lost the ability to make realistic evaluations when it thought that with a sophisticated modern war machine it could break the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and make Lebanon a puppet state by installing a Phalangist regime.

Now, a year after the war, more and more Israelis recognise the stupidity of this policy; more and more Israelis – but as yet not enough – understand that Israeli did not achieve even one of its desired objectives of the war. Israel is stuck in the mud of Lebanon. Its hands have been dirtied by war crimes such as the massacres of Sabra and Shatila and the bombing of Beirut, which killed and wounded thousands of civilians, including women and children, and destroyed hospitals and schools.

How can a small state with no natural resources and only 4 million citizens stand such enormous expenses as the war in Lebanon, which is still costing Israel US$1 million a day; how can it support one of the most sophisticated armies in the world; how can it continue the costly occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; how can it finance the huge cost of the settlements; how can it manage with an inflation rate of 140 percent – how can it finance all this and still provide its citizens with a reasonable standard of living?

The answer is: foreign aid. Despite Israel's claims that the "whole world is against her," there is no country in the world which receives such massive quantities of foreign aid as Israel. Israel receives over 30 percent of the total annual American foreign aid budget, amounting to over US$3 billion – more than India receives from America in absolute terms. (May I remind you that India has a population of 700 million and Israel only 4 million). If we add to this American aid the contributions from world Jewry and European nations we arrive at a total figure of foreign aid to Israel of between US$4 and 5 billion per year.

From this you can understand that the private Israeli citizen does not have to contribute to his own government's adventures. In Israel, therefore, it is easy to be a chauvinist because it does not cost anything; this is what one might call luxury chauvinism. Only a drastic cut in foreign aid to Israel will force the Israeli citizen to choose what he really wants – annexation or a car; settlements or fuel; war or a trip abroad.

Words will not help us here. The United Nations must convince the United States, the key government, to cut from its aid to Israel the expenses of the war in Lebanon and of the settlements in the occupied territories. Aid to Israel should be sufficient to ensure her own defence, but not to help her to reshape the Middle East.

Sixteen years of occupation and oppression has created a new Israeli with a colonial mentality, an Israeli who is racist, an Israeli who tries to cover his government's brutality and ignorance with quotations from the Bible. This Israeli, who I would call the ugly Israeli, the occupier and the oppressor, calls on the assistance of the Almighty, and thereby sanctifies the torture of Palestinians, their expulsion, the confiscation of their land, the denial of their basic rights.

In the occupied territories there is already a system of *apartheid* – one law for the native Palestinians and another for the master race, the settlers.

This is a sad story. Israel, which was supposed to be a haven for the victims of racism, has itself become a racist state. Israel, which wanted to create a new kind of Jew, free and productive, has become one of the world's major arms producers, exporting weapons to oppressive regimes all over the world.

The Palestinian readiness for a political solution, demonstrated in the speeches at this conference of Farouq Kaddoumi and Yasir Arafat, is thrown into sharp focus by the Israeli refusal to negotiate. The two committees on whose behalf I now speak join in the call for the unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and Lebanon; the removal of the fascist Israeli militia known as "the settlers"; the recognition of the right of Palestinians to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent state alongside Israel. Until this is recognised by Israel, the Committee (Against the War in Lebanon) understands that as well as other means, the PLO is forced to employ active resistance to the Israeli occupation. The Committee joins the international community in condemning the Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, demanding the immediate dismantling of the Ansar prison camp in Lebanon, and demanding the immediate cessation of the torture of prisoners in the occupied territories. The Committee hopes that this international conference will encourage the dialogue between peace forces in Israel and the PLO, who both share a common goal of mutual recognition and peace.

The Committee tries to work on both sides; it tries to convince Israelis of the dangerous consequences of their government's policy, and to join hands with Palestinians in the occupied territories in their struggle against occupation.

The war in Lebanon introduced a previously unknown phenomenon into Israeli society: the refusal of soldiers to serve in the army either in Lebanon or in the occupied territories. Allow me, Mr Chairman, at this point a personal note: I am proud to belong to those Israeli reserve soldiers who refused to take part in the Israeli aggression in Lebanon. I also notified the Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army that I will not serve in the West Bank or Gaza Strip because my oath to the army did not include the oppression of another people and the denial of the human and national rights of the Palestinians. I would like to ask the conference to consider in their draft resolutions a section which will support the Israeli soldiers who refuse service either in Lebanon or the West Bank. It is important to emphasise in the resolution that this refusal corresponds with the declaration of human rights and principles against racism adopted by the United Nations, both ratified by the Israeli government, but as yet unobserved.

Further, I would like to focus your attention on the fact that Israel has already introduced atomic weapons into the Middle East and that this has forced an atomic race in the area, thus threatening world peace. Israel has refused to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. If we want to see one day the rights of the Palestinians fulfilled, we have to prevent any possibility of using atomic weapons in the Middle East conflict. This possibility is not only theoretical, if we take into consideration that Israel is run by national and religious fanatics who believe that they have a direct line to God. I suggest you include a section demanding that Israel sign the treaty and to allow its atomic reactors to be internationally inspected.

I am not sure whether the following proposal falls within the competence of this assembly. But it is related to the subject under discussion in this conference: I refer to the war crimes committed in Lebanon for which two Israeli leaders, General Sharon and General Eitan, are chiefly responsible. The Kahan Commission Report and other official information gave enough evidence for these two men to be brought to trial for war crimes committed in Lebanon, but they have not been brought to trial. On the contrary, General Sharon is proposed as Minister of Settlements in the new government. My proposal is that this conference recommend the setting up of an independent judicial body to decide if these two men should be brought to trial.

Gideon Spiro, far right, at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine: "The Israeli government worships power. It believes that with an army and weapons it is possible to break the spirit of a people and to dictate its own policies to neighbouring countries." Also pictured, from right: Dr Uri Davis, Exeter University, England; Marwan Darwish, *Abna' al-Balad*; MK Charlie Biton; PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and, third from left, Mahmoud Fawzi Aghbariyya, *Abna' al-Balad*.

Ilham Abu Zarour, 20, was shot dead by a settler on a Nablus street, July 26, 1983 -- the same day as the massacre in Hebron. Her marriage to her cousin Bassem was to have taken place five days later. **Salman Natour**, a well-known author from Haifa, has written about Palestinian women martyrs.

A Bride on the Road

Ilham Abu Zarour and Bassem. "It would be a homeland wedding."

The honey-coloured pupils widened in the eyes of Ilham, and her young heart was gaining experience. "Close your hand," her cousin Bassem told her as they enjoyed the shelter of vines in the Shweiti farms at the entrance of Nablus. She closed her hand. "Your hand is very little, your heart is very small," he said. "And my heart grows bigger," he added, folding his fingers within her hand.

She was four when he was 10. Her soft, wine-coloured hair flowed down over her shoulders, her fingers were as long as ears of corn and wisps of hair covered her wide brow, shading her soft skin from the sun's rays that darkened. Anybody who asked, "Where are you from young girl," would believe her answer: "I am from Nablus, or the mount of fire." The fire that was dicharged by an Israeli tank was perhaps olive-green coloured, black-gray, blue-yellow. Damn! I cannot remember its colour. It bombarded an arbour and hit two people. The child of four years old had watched the tank firing one hot June day.

She remembered the hellish details of her return to home and how she did not understand peoples' questions: "Where are you from, young girl?" She continued walking, and the land seemed unable to carry her fragile body. The deserted streets shook as if there was an earthquake. The summer's sun rays seemed to consume her frightened heart — she could not explain it. "Do they remain? They will not remain." She buried her fingers in his hands and lapsed into silence to slow her beating heart.

"Why do they besiege the town?" she asked her mother, but did not receive an immediate response. "Those who have a long time to live will be saved," her mother mumbled and hastened home along Palestine Street.

Ilham wanted to get home to bury her head in her mother's lap so that her honey-coloured eyes would see neither the frightening ghosts in the streets nor the fire launchers.

"Do they kill children?" she asked her mother and buried her face in her mother's warm lap, her soft hair strewn on her coloured dress. In the other room, her cousin Bassem was waiting for her. . . and she remembered Bassem from those days.

She stopped going to sit under the vines. . . we are now grown-up and our dreams have matured. They dreamt of living under one roof. Bassem remembered the last time she entered their room and looked at the wardrobe he had made, the bed covered with a flowery bedsheet, the table on which a big mirror was fixed.

"As you see," said Bassem, "I wear a warm wool shirt in spite of the July heat. Pain and cold have gotten under my skin and make me sleepless. I recoil and recall the memories of our childhood in Shweiti farms. I furnished this house to be animated by her light, agile movements and our children. Why did she change and disappear, unwilling to attend her wedding?"

* * * * *

Ilham wore a white dress and stood under the lights in front of her groom, before the warm April sunset. She is very calm in action and appearance, her cheeks constantly glistening and her slightly dark skin not concealing a red face. Bassem gazed at her surrounded by children and angels moving round a thrown. He was surprised as young men pushed him to the courtyard, his sister making *zaghrouda* (ululations):

"Your suit, Bassem
is made of smooth silk
well-designed suit
all girls say
'we wish Bassem to be our groom'"

His mother in her blue dress had waited for this day for 25 years. Her neighbours used to drink coffee and say, "we'll drink coffee on his wedding day."

And if a fortune-teller visited, Um Bassem would insist on hearing the "signs of hope" and mumble "may God lift the burdens on our shoulders." When the fortune-teller spoke of her son's wedding, she was happy and waited for the fulfillment of the prophecy. The dream waits for children to grow up to be fulfilled.

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Ilham was very happy on the road to Najah University, swinging her bag up and down. In the old narrow alley separating the Abu Zarour family houses, Mariam, her cousin, called her every day so they could go together to the university. Mariam opened the door and said "good morning" before they left for a bright new day at the business school.

Sometimes the day ended normally but at others everything stopped when armoured military vehicles were stationed at the university entrance. Nobody was allowed in or out. And if someone took the risk, they were badly beaten. Some people did not consider it a normal day if it ended in the dark cells of the military governorate, but for those who were accustomed to the place, it was entirely usual.

Ilham always attempted to avoid facing the interrogator as the mere sight of him made her sick. So what if she was beaten.

On the day of her death she was returning from Jerusalem. "What a miserable state we've reached," she mumbled, and her mother did not understand what she said. Tears swam through her eyes — she was anxious for unknown reasons. While sitting on the back seat of the car, she asked the man sitting near the window to open it. A strong gust struck her face. She wanted to ask him again to close it but preferred to endure the wind rather than appear rude.

She did not pay much attention to the conversation or comments on the Hebron massacre. Suddenly she heard an insult from the man sitting near the window, who apologised and allowed her to close it. She felt at ease when the window was shut.

She was preoccupied thinking about the young men shot at the university. She thought of what was happening now in Nablus. "Perhaps the army closed the town," she told herself, watching the traffic until the car passed the mud huts of Balata camp.

In the prison courtyard, military vehicles were ready to move quickly into the streets of the town, but this scene was not unusual. Perhaps the armoured vehicles would patrol the streets exactly at the time the music started at Assi Cinema Hall, and the young men would carry her groom on their shoulders, singing: "The handsome one left the bath, the name of God is upon him." The beautiful bride would appear in her white dress with her bracelets around her wrists and the diamond tiara on her head shining. A belt of roses would be fixed around her waist.

The singers would sing: "Oh, pomegranates on the bow." She would bend in respect. As they sang for the homeland, the engines of the armoured vehicles would start. She would dance the bridal dance. It would be a homeland wedding.

When the car stopped in the centre yard of the town her mother interrupted her dreams. "Let's go home down Palestine Street," she said. Since Ilham had grown up she had never contradicted her mother, but this time she said, "No, mother, the Anabtawi Building way is faster."

* * * * *

The helicopters' roar vanished after hovering over the town. In the small room, the mother of 11 children sat on the bed covered with a dark blue bedsheet. The woman lamented her dead daughter, holding a wet handkerchief. She dried her eyes and words stuck in her throat. "She went out on foot and came home carried on. . . mother, mother, mother. It is my happiest day and the day of lamenting. . . why, why, why, why, why?" the mother cried.

All left the house but the small children. One carried her picture. He seemed not to believe he would never see her again. He broke into tears.

The groom looked at the picture with tired eyes and placed it on his chest. "I was at my carpentry shop when I heard the news. They said that my cousins were wounded and taken to Rafidia Hospital. I ran there. My brother told me that Mariam was in the operating room. I asked, 'Where is Ilham?' 'May God help you,' he replied. I thought that she was wounded. Then I heard crying and wailings and they said Ilham had died.

"A day before we had spent the whole night writing wedding invitations and look what has happened. Somebody stopped his car and started shooting aimlessly."

The Assi Cinema Hall remained deserted. The band did not come. The young women did not sing:

"Oh, pomegranate on thy head,
whose branches are numerous
On your wedding, Bassem,
I will dance and sing."

His mother had waited for this occasion for 25 years, yet she swallowed the words of her song:

"Destroy this doorstep, mother,
destroy it
we hang her wedding dresses
my heart is not like any heart
my heart is heavily burdened."

The father, brother, sister, uncle and mother all left the house at midnight, only three days before her wedding to join her funeral procession. They carried the coffin upon their shoulders. Ilham, her honey-coloured eyes closed, was placed on the wooden board. Her soft, delicate body shook as the procession approached the cemetery. The music did not start, and even the prayers were silenced. "Bury her quickly and quietly," the assassin who accompanied the funeral ordered.

"Do they kill children?" Ilham had asked her mother when she was four. And she did not get an answer. After she was buried and the dense darkness dominated all, Ilham moved quietly out of her coffin. She was wearing her white dress, sometimes extending her left arm bright with bracelets and sometimes extending her right arm, waving them like the sea waves.

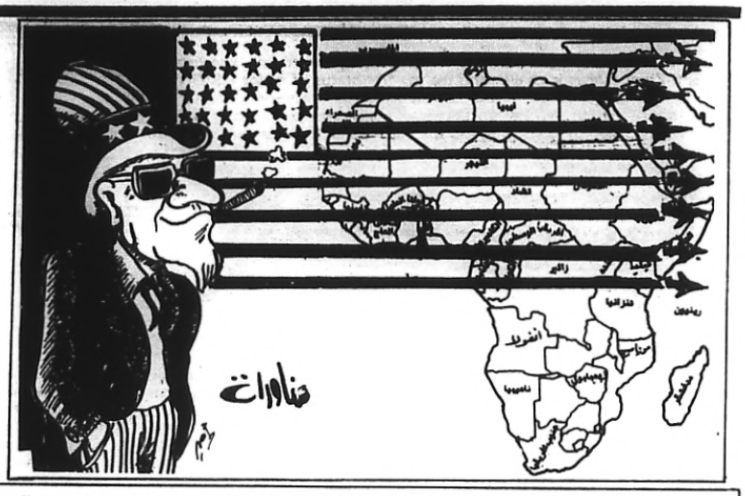
She vanished in the darkness and then was seen on the horizon, a ghost of an angel, and the soft soil collapsed on her delicate body as she slept on her bed covered with flowery bedsheets.

She lived as a bride and died a bride.

Her young sister collected her school papers.

(Translated by Said al-Ghazali: Al Jadid, No. 8, 1983)

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



Like all the media all over the world, almost all week Palestinian papers in the occupied territories led with stories on the explosions that destroyed the American and French bases in Beirut.

Local papers also reported on the US invasion of Grenada, all of them condemning it editorially. US President Ronald Reagan came in extensive personal criticism. His explanations were called "hypocritical" by several commentators.

The elections for municipal and local councils inside the 'green line' were also widely reported.

The continuing of tension in the Tripoli area and reports of armed clashes were also given prominent coverage.

OUR CURE CAN'T COME FROM THE US

The United States has decided to intervene with Israel on behalf of the Palestinians under its occupation to improve their economic conditions. It decided to look for "moderates" to help it achieve its aim. The US insists that the solution to the problem lies in the pockets of some moderates. It has tried more than once to look for such moderates and couldn't find more than a handful.

We are sure our troubles have been created by the US. We are sure as well that our cure cannot be American, even if some moderates are found. The US knows what the problem is and always tries to make it worse. It knows the medicine is not food parcels. The whole world knows what the cure is, and so do we.

The US wants first to find a moderate leadership in the occupied lands before it decides to help. But the people here have already made it clear to everyone that they have chosen their leadership and will not take anyone else. Therefore, all American attempts to find a moderate leadership are doomed to failure.

AL FAJR
October 21

CITY COUNCIL CAMPAIGNS... AND US

With the intensification of the Jerusalem municipal election campaign, the Arab people of this city, realising the reality behind Israeli attempts to involve them in the polls, are keeping a wary eye on them.

The people here realise that their participation in the elections means recognition of Israel's occupation and annexation the city. It also means they allow a new reality to emerge leading towards furthur Judaisation of the city and increased settlements that would make any other sovereignty over it unrealistic.

Active participation in these elections contradicts our non-recognition of Israeli authority over East Jerusalem and its annexation in 1967. Annexing the city was a blatant violation of international laws and agreements. This act was condemned and is considered illegal by most of the world. The only exceptions are Costa Rica and Zaire – all the other nations that have diplomatic relations with Israel do not recognise its control of Jerusalem and refuse to move their embassies here. These include the US and Western European nations.

Looking at it from this direction, Jerusalem city council elections for us is a political issue more than a matter of services or the extending of water or sewage pipes. All blocs of candidates (except one –English ed.) believe in the annexation of Jerusalem and the denial of Arab rights by confiscating their lands, establishing settlements, deportation, arrests, heavy taxes and other issues. If there is something called "moderation" by some Israeli official, it is only an attempt to cover up their denial of our legitimate rights, particularly our right to self-determination and to establishing an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

AL FAJR
October 22

BETWEEN CEASE-FIRE AND RECONCILIATION

When a cease-fire agreement was reached in Lebanon, the regime felt that it was able to win legitimacy from the National Salvation Front, the Palestinian revolution and Syria. This pleased Arab reactionaries and imperialist America.

The cease-fire seems to hold in name only for there are regular clashes particulary, in South Beirut. We realise the reality of the conflict in Lebanon. We saw the cease-fire reached at by Saudi and American efforts, themselves representative of imperialism and reactionaries, as nothing more than a time-out for the warriors. We are sure the agreement was not sucessful. All this time only one condition in the agreement was considered; the site of the national reconciliation meeting.

We wonder how long it will take them to consider the more important issues like representation and ruling.

We feel this can only be accomplished after the Phalange regime is done away with. This regime cannot become nationalist overnight.

AL MITHAQ
October 22

MNF'S FUTURE

The American and French contingents in the Multinational Force in Beirut came to carry on specific missions, primarily to bring stability, order and security back to the western section of Beirut, particularly in the Palestinian refugee camps there.

It is known that a small contingent of French and American troops came to Beirut during the Israeli siege of the city last year to supervise the withdrawal of the Palestinian fighters from it. They left Lebanon soon after but returned in a hurry after the Sabra and Shatila massacres that shocked the world and forced their return in greater numbers and with more weapons.

The MNF then found itself deeply involved in the Lebanese quagmire which reached a climax with yesterday's massive explosions that killed about 200 American and French-soldiers.

The important thing is that these explosions do not complicate the Lebanese crisis and that efforts to peacefully resolve it continue. That country has had enough destruction and bloodshed over the past nine years.

AL QUDS
October 24

REAL DANGERS AND POSSIBILITIES

The American people have not forgotten that their former president, Richard Nixon, caused the deaths of their sons in Vietnam. Likewise, they will not forget that the current "cowboy" president, Ronald Reagan, is the cause of the death of their Marines in Beirut.

The tears of Israel's premier, Yitzhak Shamir, and members of the previous cabinet, particularly (ex-defence minister Ariel) Sharon, over the American and French casualties in Lebanon are more dangerous that "crocodile tears." A spokesman for Shamir's government was quoted by Israel Radio to have said yesterday that the help proposed to the Americans and French in Lebanon is not only "medical" but "help of a different kind, which cannot be explained publicly."

We warned the American officials that their foolish intervention in Lebanon could recreate the Vietnam tragedy. But it seems they thought, like the Israelis, that people today are different and "the Arabs are not like the Vietnamese." This led the cowboy who became president of the world's biggest imperialist nation to arrogantly threaten all the Arabs with his fleets and soldiers.

We do not rule out the possibility that there may be something being cooked up. The Korean war in the 1950s began in similar circumstances. Reagan's recent statements indicate the possibility of massive military intervention in the region. It is feared that there is in Israel now a ruling group known for its extremist policies and ready to fall back on American aggression and intervention in the region.

It is now clear the aggressors, Israelis or Americans, have only two choices: either total withdrawal without conditions, or to involve the whole region and themselves in a new military adventure.

We call on our people to be prepared and for the parties involved to stop the deterioration of the situation because it is too late. After Tuesday (local election day) we will be subjected to new dangers and new possibilities. We have reached crucial moments, therefore we should be decisive.

AL ITTIHAD
October 24

TWO EXPLOSIONS IN BEIRUT

While the Americans were searching for the bodies of soldiers buried in the rubble of the Marine headquarters in Beirut, US President Ronald Reagan was talking of the importance of continued Western control over the Middle East.

It seems Reagan does not want to understand that his imperialist and expansionist policies caused the death of the American soldiers in Beirut and will be responsible for any more anti-American actions in the region.

Reagan is no more talking of the role of Marines as peacekeepers and US efforts to save Lebanon and bring peace to the area. He is saying bluntly that his goal is to consolidate Western hegemony over the Middle East and to destroy all revolutionary movements questioning this hegemony.

This imperialist approach warns against possible new American aggression against the Arab people. Talking of "punishment," "revenge," and possible occupation of certain areas in Lebanon is the prelude for these aggressive policies.

This makes it imperative that all Arab nationalist countries and forces overcome their secondry differences and consolidate their ranks to face the upcoming challenges.

AL SHA'AB
October 25

An American-Jewish lawyer representing Palestinians, Israelis and anti-Zionist Jews is challenging the tax-free status of major US Zionist organisations. This landmark case could end the unrestricted flow of US$0.75 billion to Israel, **Daoud Kuttab** learned recently in an interview with chief attorney Mark Lane. He expects a series of startling revelations over the issue of Zionist financing – a scandal he has already dubbed 'Ziongate'.

Advocate Mark Lane Takes on Palestinian Case

Mark Lane, along with fellow Washington attorney Linda Huber, is known in the US and internationally for his role in the investigations of the assassinations of US President John Kennedy and black civil rights activist Martin Luther King. While in Jerusalem holding press conferences on his important lawsuit, Lane spoke to *Al Fajr* about his political background and how he got involved in the Middle East conflict.

Mark Lane started his legal work in a store front law office in New York City's East Harlem in 1952. Seeing oppression and poverty, he soon realised that more than legal representation was needed, and he became more politically active in the Democratic Party. Lane started the Reform Democratic Movement, which spread throughout the state of New York. He ran for the New York State Assembly and was elected to it in 1961, thanks to the endorsement of US President Kennedy. Lane was one of two campaign managers for the Democratic Party's presidential candidate. Two years later when Kennedy was assassinated, he began an independent investigation of the killing. His conclusions, which ran counter to the official Warren Commission's report, were published in the book *Rush to Judgement*, in which Lane asserted: "Evidence shows that there was a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy and that it seemed the CIA was involved." Lane's book was a best seller in the US hard back edition in 1966 and again in 1967 when the paperback sold over one million copies.

Mark Lane's other attention-grabbing cases included his representation of the Indians of Wounded Knee (in 1973 Indians held 10 hostages after seizing the settlement of Wounded Knee and demanded the government discuss their grievances) and his efforts to rescue Americans trapped by cult leader Jim Jones in his Guiana settlement of Jonestown. Lane, who says he was asked by US Congressman Ryan to help evacuate the Americans trapped by Jones, was arrested and narrowly escaped death when the cult leader and his followers – over 900 individuals – were killed by drinking poisoned soft drink.

Middle East Involvement

In 1980, while he was in Memphis, Tennessee looking into the investigatio.. of the assassination of black civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Mark Lane received a call from the Palestine Information Office in Beirut. The PLO official calling Lane told him that they had heard of his work and wanted him to come to Lebanon on an exploratory visit. Lane, who had earlier convinced the US Congress to examine the murders of Kennedy and King, told the Palestinian caller that he had done "nothing about the Palestinian question" and besides he was Jewish. The Palestinian official replied that they were contacting him because of his efforts in raising difficult questions in the US Congress and that it was good that he was Jewish.

Lane accepted the invitation and came to Beirut where he met PLO public relations director Mahmoud Labadi. He spent three week touring Palestinian refugee camps, Red Crescent hospitals, trade unions and Samed factories throughout Lebanon. Lane also met PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and spent a few hours in discussion with the Palestinian leader. Says Lane of the meeting, "I was impressed with what he had to say and learned many things in my talk with Arafat."

Upon returning to the United States, Mark Lane approached the New York based Royce Carlton Lectures Bureau, which organises lectures in major US universities, and told them he wanted to tour the US speaking on the Middle East. Until then Mark Lane was considered by *Time* magazine as one of the three most popular lecturers in the US, receiving about 300 speaking invitations annually. He spoke mainly on the Kennedy and King assassinations and the Vietnam war.

When the New York lecture bureau checked with the various universities, the majority rejected the offer, refusing to host a Lane lecture on the Middle East. The same response came from all major lecture bureaux. "I tried all of them," says Lane. Unable to hook up with lecture bureaux, Lane contacted the General Union of Palestinian Students who help arrange a much smaller tour.

Tax Exemptions

Advocate Lane explains that he was quite aware of the huge funds that were being collected every year for the state of Israel by tax exempt organisations. After a preliminary investigation, Lane discovered that the funds collected by these agencies were not being used for charitable educational purposes as the law requires. "It is a logical conclusion that the money was given (to Israel) to steal land from Palestinians."

Later, as Lane began to look closely into the subject and to read the literature of the various Zionist organisations involved, he discovered that many of them were "taking pride in advertising settlements in areas which were not settled before (ie, the West Bank, Gaza and Golan)."

Further research brought more evidence. While reading a Jewish National Fund publication, Lane saw an article proudly proclaiming the JNF's role in building the Gitit settlement. Upon coming to the West Bank in 1983, Lane discovered that Gitit is on confiscated Palestinian land in the West Bank village of Aqraba. The mukhtar of the village agreed to join the lawsuit he was planning to bring, challenging the tax-free status of the Jewish National Fund and many other organisations, one of which, Americans for a Safe Israel based in New York, was advertising that it was selling West Bank land (taken from Palestinians) exclusively to American Jews.

'Ziongate'

On October 6, 1983, Mark Lane and Linda Huber filed their lawsuit in the US district court of the District of Columbia, representing 15 plaintiffs, including four West Bank mayors, Palestinian landowners, a member of the Israeli Knesset, a Jewish rabbi and American and Israeli individuals, all who were hurt by the use of tax-exempt funds given to a number of Zionist organisations.

After it was filed, Lane says he received a call from a high-ranking official of the JNF who told him, "Everything in this suit is absolutely correct, and there is much more." The American official, who plans to testify if asked, told Lane of many other illegal practices carried out by various US Zionist organisations. As an example of the irregularities the Jewish official revealed, he cites cases of donors being asked to pay US$2000 to the JNF on the understanding that for the next 20 years the JNF will send a US$100 check to a young relative of the donor on his or her birthday. The donor is told orally, the source alleges, that they can deduct the US$2000 contribution from taxes.

Mark Lane says that this action is an "absolute crime" and he feels that during the "stage of discovery," when attorneys will have the opportunity to examine officials and documents, much more information of illegalities committed by the various Zionist organisations will come to light. Lane prefers to call the expected scandal 'Ziongate', in reference to the Watergate scandal.

Chances

Winning a case against the US Secretary of the Treasury is not an easy task. But Mark Lane feels that political prejudice aside, "we have an absolutely sound case."

His assessment is echoed by a top tax exemption expert in the US, Professor Bruce Hopkins, he says. Hopkins, who is author of the classic book on tax-exempt organisations, helped Lane and Huber draft the case they filed. Nevertheless, Lane points out that many other battles have already been won. "We have done what no others have done in that we have filed," he points out.

Lane says that the government has to respond within 60 days. "If we can defeat the 'motion to dismiss' which the government may file, then we will enter the stage of discovery," he explains. Lane feels that this is the stage in which many scandals will be revealed since the various US Zionist organisations will have to come to court and answer just about anything related to their activities.

Lane concludes that "if law prevails, we will have a trial in which we can call to the witness stand in Washington's district court all the defendants, including the Palestinian mayors and landowners, who will have a chance to champion their cause and at the same time block the tax exempt status of the various Zionist organisations," he concludes.

continued from page 1

Elections

on Israeli ID cards) to be sure of their jobs. Hamdi, 45, a cleaner in Hadassah Hospital who lives in Ras al-Amud, told *Al Fajr*, "I am sure if I did not vote, the hospital administration would dismiss me. I have to feed nine kids. Politically," the man said, "I understand what is happening. I always listen to the *Voice of Palestine* (radio station) and hope Palestinian aspirations will be fulfilled. Maybe if there was a total boycott I would join the others."

Nasser, a Jerusalem landowner, was also on the Kollek campaign. He explained that he had been trying to get a permit to build a hotel in East Jerusalem for years and that in 1976 he hosted a banquet for Kollek during the run-up to the poll but did not get a license. This year he gave his offices to Kollek's list rent-free in the hope that the mayor would relent on the permit issue.

Virtually every voter cited personal reasons in their dealings with the municipality, their excuse for going to the polls. Straight bribery also played a part. The going rate for a vote, according to people who took money, was between IS1000-IS3000. A source in the Jewish religious community in West Jerusalem said vote-buyers were paying US$100 to Arab recruiters and IS3000 a head for voters.

Residents in the Beit Hanina suburb of Jerusalem told *Al Fajr* that the Israeli National Religious Party was very active in buying votes there. One resident said that a local restaurant next to the voting booth was giving free meals to anyone brought in by an Orthodox Jewish driver accompanied by an Arab resident.

Dr Amin Khatib, head of the West Bank charitable associations, told *Al Fajr* that Teddy Kollek also ran an aggressive Arabic leaflet campaign, claiming he would protect Islamic sites in the city and quoting Tussia-Cohen's statements in favour of allowing Israelis to pray at al-Aqsa Mosque.

Some youths in East Jerusalem did hand out leaflets the day before the poll calling for a boycott. Three were arrested.

Mohammed Batrawi, member of the executive of the Arab Journalists Association, told *Al Fajr* the participation of Palestinian Jerusalemites "does not have any political implications – it does not mean that they agree on the annexation of East Jerusalem." All those who vote in the election have their own personal interests. "However this does not mean that the PLO has lost its power in Jerusalem," said Batrawi, in reference to Israeli news media claims.

According to Israeli election officials, 12,000 Palestinians from a total eligible of 65,000 went through the polling stations. *The Jerusalem Post*, however, cited percentages of 10 and 20 percent in separate articles. Some East Jerusalem commentators say they "simply do not believe Israeli statistics."

WEEKLY REVIEW

October 19, 1983

YOUTHS ARRESTED

JENIN — A number of Palestinian youths were rounded up at an early morning checkpoint outside the village of Silat al-Harthieh, near Jenin. The youths were taken to military headquarters for a few hours and then released. No explanation was given.

UNIONISTS BANNED FROM GAZA

JERUSALEM — The chairman of the Tulkarm voluntary work committee, Assad Odeh, was placed under town arrest in the city. Odeh is a fourth year student at Najah University in Nablus. The military cited "security reasons" for the administrative order.

Odeh must remain at home from sundown to dawn and never leave the town boundaries.

ARTIST BANNED FROM WEST BANK

KUFR QASSEM — The Israeli authorities banned artist Abed Tamam from entering the West Bank or the Gaza Strip for one year. The order, signed by the military commander of the central region, cites unspecified "security reasons."

NEW SETTLEMENT IN NABLUS

A special settlement for employees of the Israeli ministry of communications will be established near Nablus, *Ma'ariv* newspaper reported.

According to the newspaper, the government will establish infrastructure for the employees to build private homes.

SETTLERS VANDALISE CAR

DHEISHEH — A group of settlers destroyed a car owned by a resident of Dheisheh refugee camp.

October 20, 1983

BORDER GUARDS JOIN ELECTIONEERING

TIRA — A car owned by Omar Habib carrying workers home to Tira, in the Triangle was stopped by border guards at the town's entrance. The guards removed Democratic Front for Peace and Equality election stickers from the car and cursed the passengers.

When workers protested, the border guards issued a ticket charging Habib with not stopping at a red light in nearby Kfar Saba. The driver was repeatedly told "not to argue" when he asked how they could judge that when they were stationed in Tira.

MIRACLES REPORTED

TEL AVIV — The Hebrew daily *HaAretz* said the US has asked Israel to improve the economic situation on the West Bank and Gaza and reduce pressure on Palestinian universities. The suggestion reportedly came from a recent fact-finding delegation led by State Department advisor William Kirby.

GRENADE ATTACK IN JERUSALEM SUBURB

A hand grenade was thrown at an Israeli car near Gilo, a Jerusalem settlement, Israel Radio reported. There was no damage reported and no reason was given for the attack.

STONE-CUTTING SHOP DEMOLISHED

BETHLEHEM — Israeli bulldozers demolished stone-cutting shops owned by Muhammad Fawar, near Khader, and Abd al-Rahman Fanoun, near the Jerusalem-Hebron highway. Fawar said he received orders on January 1 1982, from the Israeli military to stop all work in the factory, and October 15 1982, to move his equipment. No reasons were given for the demolitions.

SLOGANEERS HELD

Three young Palestinians from the village of Qatannah were detained on charges of writing anti-Israel slogans on a wall in Jerusalem, *Davar* reported.

October 21, 1983

SAMIHA KHALIL BANNED FROM JORDAN

JERUSALEM — Samiha Khalil, president of the *Inash al-Ussrah* organisation, was banned by Israeli authorities from travelling to Jordan.

Khalil sent a message to womens' groups throughout the world asking them to help her travel to Jordan to visit her six sons living there.

NO EXIT FROM QALQILIYA

QALQILIYA — The Israeli bridge authorities banned all Qalqiliya residents under 40 from travelling to Amman. No reason was given.

October 22, 1983

MORE CHOLERA IN GAZA

GAZA — A new cholera case was reported in Gaza, bringing the number of reported cases in the past 24 hours to four, all from the same family in al-Shajaieh area. Eleven cases were previously treated and released, last month.

AL FAJR CLARIFIES POSITION

JERUSALEM — A statement issued by *Al Fajr* Arabic daily denied any involvement in Israeli local elections. The paper noted that a pamphlet distributed by the campaign office for West Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek carried the *Al Fajr* logo. The emblem and a story *Al Fajr* wrote, June 13, headlined "Tussia-Cohen calls for harsher treatment of Arabs", appeared in one of Kollek's leaflets to make it look as if *Al Fajr* supported him, the paper said. They denied knowledge of, or involvement with, the leaflets.

DUTCH UNIFIL REDUCTION

ROTTERDAM — The Dutch government announced it will pull 600 of its 750-strong UNIFIL contingent out of South Lebanon following a series of harrassments by Israeli soldiers and their Lebanese militia allies led by Sa'ad Haddad. Dutch sources said the soldiers are returning home carrying bitter memories of Israeli attitudes in Lebanon.

The 150 Dutch force left behind will continue to work with refugees and civilians disabled because of last year's Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

October 23, 1983

BOMB EXPLOSION AT NABLUS MILITARY HQ

An explosive device went off in front of the Israeli military headquarters in Nablus, the Israel Radio said. No report of the damage was given, but the radio said several Palestinians were rounded up for interrogation.

PALESTINE BANK TRANSFERS

GAZA — The Egyptian authorities gave permission for the Bank of Palestine in Gaza to transfer money to Egypt.

SKY-HIGH RENT IN JENIN

JENIN — Prospective merchants bid up to JD 3600 for yearly rental of stores in a new Jenin shopping center built by the *waqf* (Islamic foundation). This is three times the amount of rent in the city.

Border checkpoint between Israel and Lebanon. Border guards discovered several cars loaded with explosives trying to cross into Israel this week./MK photo

ISRAELIS BET US$3 MILLION

TEL AVIV — *Davar* newspaper reported that 80 Israeli businessmen and some members of the diamond exchange members gamble at least US$3 million a month.

YOUTH ARRESTED IN GAZA

GAZA — The Israeli military arrested 19-year-old Salman Odeh, who came to Gaza from Egypt without permission. He will be handed over to the Egyptian authorities.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES GET RAISE

NABLUS — All government employees in the West Bank will get a 20.3 percent pay raise as of this month. The Israeli officer in charge of education in the West Bank said there is a study now in progress on all employees' and teachers' salaries.

TOURIST BUS STOLEN

JERUSALEM — A bus belonging to Abdo Tourism was stolen in Ramat Gan.

LEBANESE EXPORT

TEL AVIV — Israel's minister of interior, Yosef Burg, said border guards have discovered several cars loaded with explosives at Metulla and Ras al-Naqura crossing points on the Israeli-Lebanese border. Burg was quoted by Israel Radio as saying one crossed into Israel, but that the driver was arrested later.

He suggested it may be better to allow Lebanese citizens to enter Israel without their cars.

October 24, 1983

DEMONSTRATORS ARRESTED

An Israeli military source said three Nablus youths were arrested on charges of demonstrating against the occupation and throwing stones at Israeli soldiers.

EXPLOSION HURTS YATTA MAN

HEBRON — A Yatta man, Salem Najjadeh, 18, was admitted to hospital in Hebron following an explosion. Najjadeh was later transferred to an eye hospital in Jerusalem for treatment. No further details were available.

UNRWA ELECTION HELD

KALANDIA — Elections were held at the UNRWA Kalandia institution to choose the executive committee of UNRWA employees. The elected committee for the general services and workers branches includes: Husni Shehab, president, Jamal Awad, secretary, Hassan Badra, vice president, Yusef Tilkh, treasurer, and Adnan Taha, member-at-large.

ISRAEL NAVY KIDNAPS PALESTINIANS

JERUSALEM — The Israeli television reported that Israeli ships off the Lebanese coast stopped ships and arrested PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's bodyguard and an officer called "Abu Ahmad."

TEACHERS DEMAND 100% PAY INCREASE

NABLUS — West bank teachers asked the military government to increase their salaries by 100 percent in light of the recent deterioration in the economic situation.

ART EXHIBIT OPENS

NABLUS — An exhibition of the works of Palestinian artists Kamal Mughani and Sami Abd al-Nour opened in Nablus.

Hundreds of dunums of planted tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables were plowed over to build this access road to Givat Zeev, a new settlement planted on the village lands of Beitunia and Jeeb./ST photo

October 25, 1983

PALESTINIAN PERSONALITIES DENY VOTING

JERUSALEM — Several Palestinian personalities denied rumours that they voted in the Jerusalem municipal elections. They told *Al Fajr* that these rumours are an attempt to defame them and create internal strife. Papers received calls on polling day alleging that a variety of individuals had voted.

BEER SHEBA JAIL "INHUMAN"

The head of the construction department in the ministry of labour, Menachem Horowiz, said he feels "disgusted" with the bad conditions at Beer Sheba jail, following a visit there.

He described the prison as overcrowded and smelly. He said he saw with his own eyes how 17 detainees were in a cell only big enough for six people.

ISRAELIS PAY HIGHEST TAXES

TEL AVIV — The director of the Institute for Social Science Research in Israel, Yisrael Katz, said taxes in Israel are the highest in the world. In spite of this, he said, taxes only make up 55 percent of the state budget. Katz said the poor carry the heaviest burden. They pay 32 percent of their income in taxes, compared to 36 percent for middle class and 44 percent by the rich.

SELECTIONS FROM THE HEBREW PRESS

FUTURE CITIZENS OF PALESTINE

MK Abba Eban said it is mistaken to think that settlements established in the West Bank are blocking a territorial compromise. Such a compromise, he said, does not necessitate uprooting settlements, because if there are Arab villages in Israel, "Who said that in an Arab state there cannot be Jewish settlements?"

MK Abba Eban was speaking at the conference of the Mashov Council, the new generation of the Labour Party, that took place, October 23, at the Labour Party house in Tel Aviv. (Translation: HaAretz, October 24, 1983).

QUIET! LEAGUE DOZING

Inhabitants of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem, are very bitter after a street was closed to traffic because it is close to the house of Bishara Qumsiyya, acting chairman of the Village Leagues.

"Even the street next to the house of the prime minister (of Israel) is not closed to traffic," said one Beit Sahour councillor. The street was closed for traffic by order of the 'civil administration' in the Bethlehem region.

The mayor stated that he discussed the issue with the head of the 'civil administration' in Bethlehem and was told that his complaint would be examined. He said neither he nor local residents complained to the police, fearing revenge by Qumsiyya's men who are armed.

Bishara Qumsiyya said in reply that the closure of the street was ordered by the 'civil administration' and the District Traffic Commission, the street itself is a side-street and that therefore the closure does not interrupt the regular traffic in town. (Translation: Yediot Aharanot, October 21, 1983).

THE DEBKA IS NOT AN ISRAELI DANCE

When El Al (Israel's airline) wished to dress its stewardesses in embroidered dresses, the Palestinian Women's Association objected, pointing out the dress in question was a copy of the robe of the Palestinian woman.

When former (Israeli) minister of finance Yigal Horowitz changed the Israeli lira to the shekel, Iraq turned to the International Monetary Fund, claiming that the name of the Israeli coin was stolen from Iraq, from a coin that was in use thousands of years ago in Mesopotamia.

Now Egypt has raised the claim that the *debka* is not Israeli. The Egyptian daily *Al Gomhuriyah* reports that the Egyptian participants in a popular folk festival in Britain refuted the false claim of the Israeli dance troop that the *debka* is an Israeli folk dance.

The daily adds, "Pictures and sketches from the past are in our possession which enforce our claim that the *debka* has been an Egyptian dance for hundreds of years." (Translation: MaAriv, October 20, 1983).

THE LAST DAYS OF THE ISRAELI EMPIRE

LONDON — The chairman of the board of directors of Marks and Spencers, Lord Seiff, who is active in the Britain-Israel Chamber of Commerce, sharply attacked Israel's economic policies. He said what is happening in Israel reminds him of the last days of the Roman Empire.

The empire endeavoured to satisfy popular hedonism by providing bread and circuses for the masses, while the government of Israel, in his opinion, endeavours to do the same by policies of TVC — "television, video and cars." He calls for further devaluation of the shekel in order to increase exports, even if this policy burdens British exporters to Israel. (Translation: HaAretz, October 23, 1983)

Outcry Follows Detention Of UN Conferees

The magistrates court in Haifa decided, October 20, to extend the detention of advocate Mohammed Mi'ari, 41, member of the secretariat of the Committee for the Defence of the Land, and Maysara Sayed, 27, a senior student at the Technion in Haifa, for eight more days on charges of making contacts with PLO senior officials during the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine in September. The case has caused outcry from Israeli peace activists.

Police representative Abraham Nafieh told the court that they suspect Mi'ari and Sayed "violated the Emergency Defence Regulations (1945) by conducting working sessions with PLO representatives." He said they met Yasir Arafat and chairman of the political department Farouq Kaddoumi in Geneva. In court Mi'ari said that 20 Israelis and Palestinians, including (Reserve General) Mattityahu Peled, Felicia Langer and Uri Avneri, met with Yasir Arafat and Farouq Kaddoumi during the conference. He said he considers he was arrested for "political reasons". Police representatives claimed that Mi'ari conducted "side meetings".

Judge Salim Jubran said in his decision that he had received a "secret report" from the police about Mi'ari. Both Mi'ari and Sayed were not permitted to consult their lawyer.

Regarding Sayed, the judge said the police found a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine pamphlet among his possessions. Mi'ari and Sayed were arrested late October 17 on unspecified security charges.

Commenting on the detention, Gideon Spiro of the Israeli Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University (CSBZU), who was at the UN conference in Geneva and also met Arafat, protested against the detention of Mi'ari and Sayed, noting that Mi'ari encouraged the peaceful dialogue between the Palestinians and Israelis, CSBZU has demanded the immediate release of the two men.

Reserve General Mattityahu Peled told *Al Fajr* that it is "unacceptable" that defence lawyer Moshe Ammar was not shown the details of the "secret" accusations against Mi'ari or that a lawyer cannot see his clients. Peled stated that meeting Arafat or other PLO representatives is not illegal, "since 1967 courts have ruled that contacts with the PLO officials are not considered criminal offences," he said.

Peled stated that if the lone charge against the men is meeting Arafat or Kaddoumi then it is a violation of the basic elementary rights of Israeli citizens. He described Mi'ari as a sensitive person who is "not capable of committing any offence. We must pressure the authorities to reveal the so-called secret charges against Mi'ari," Peled concluded.

The arrest of the UN participants has drawn wide coverage in the Israeli news media.

Israeli and Palestinian figures from inside the pre-1948 borders who attended the UN conference issued a statement, October 23, denouncing the arrest. The statement said that the aim of the arrest is to "scare Israeli residents from continuing talks with the PLO." The signatories affirmed, "We will continue these meetings because we believe that they bring forward the issue of peace."

Al Fajr has learned from reliable sources that foreign delegates who were at the Conference on the Question of Palestine are petitioning to the UN secretary general to intervene personally to obtain the release of the two Palestinian activists.

As people who participated in the UN Conference on the Question of Palestine in Geneva in the beginning of September, we express our anger at the arrests of **Advocate Mohammed Mi'ari** and student **Maysara Sayed**, accused of meeting with leaders of the PLO in Geneva during the conference.

The apparent aim of this step is to deter citizens of Israel who believe in the need for talks with the PLO. Israeli citizens, Jews and Arabs, have met with PLO leaders in international conferences and on various occasions in an endeavor to advance the interests of peace, and they will not be prevented from continuing endeavors to advance the interests of peace. It should be noted that the Knesset resolved in a special session in 1976 that such political meetings are not against the law and this standpoint has been taken consistently by the government's legal advisor ever since.

If there are additional accusations against them these should be brought to the knowledge of the detainees, their lawyers and the public.

We demand the immediate release of Advocate Mohammed Mi'ari and the student Maysara Sayed.

Uri Avneri	Saliba Khamis
Advocate Ibrahim Irshad	Salwa Mousa
Mahmoud Aghbariyya	Advocate Felicia Langer
Marwan Aghbariyya	Gideon Spiro
MK Charlie Biton	Dr Matti Peled
Yaffa Gavish	Dr Tikvah Parnas
Meirav Dvir	Dr Naomi Kiss
Emil Habibi	Osnat Ron
MK Tawfiq Toubi	Advocate Aziz Shehadeh
Jamal Tarabiyya	Yesha'ayahu Thoma Shick

The irony of all the lists runnning for office in Arab villages on National (Israeli) Religious (Jewish) Party tickets is totally ignored by apologists for Israeli-style democracy. In fact, as Al Fajr feature editor Awad Abdel Fattah found on a trip to Sakhnin in the Galilee recently, the reasoning behind such a seeming contradiction is the rule rather than the exception.

Mustafa Abu Rayya, DFPE mayorial candidate in Sakhnin, speaks to a popular meeting as part of his campaign, October 4.

The Mechanics of Electioneering Inside the 'Green Line'

We are now at the height of the municipal elections campaign inside the 'green line'. It will culminate with the poll, October 25. The procedure will seem like polls anywhere — boxes, ballots, secrecy, parties. But there is something strange about the elections in Arab villages. An American friend hit the nail on the head when he queried, "How can a Palestinian join a Zionist party in Israel? Their platforms are completely hostile to the Palestinians."

This statement, in fact, reflects lack of knowledge of the elements behind the phenomenon of the Zionist-backed Arab election lists. Arab functionaries are simply not expected to support the platform of the parties they support, one veteran elections observer told *Al Fajr*, they are there to mobilise voters by any means.

The history of Zionist parties' activities in Arab villages dates from the establishment of the state of Israel. In those days, the authorities concentrated on the Arab traditional elements and leadership and the heads of *hamulas* (extended families) who were not willing to resist Israeli policy.

These traditional elements were backed politically and materially by government circles who helped them into the sensitive positions in Arab society — in charge of the local councils, or as mukhtars. At the same time they were used for recruiting Arab votes for the Zionist party, mainly the ruling Labour Party in the Knesset elections, although minority Arab votes are a significant factor in overall terms.

The system of control has been well-documented in Ian Lustick's book *Arabs in the Jewish State*. According to the Israeli officials quoted there, they wanted to keep control of the Palestinian community and prevent radical initiatives. The traditional leaders with little political experience remained the dominant force in the Arab politics until the early 1970s. Since then the Israelis have been working towards creating a new generation of "collaborators" after the influence of the traditional elements shrank to almost zero.

The bankruptcy of the older technique hit home with the Israelis only when over half the Arab local councils fell to the independent Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE) and the Communist Party since 1976. But Zionist-backed Arab lists still run in almost every village.

Politics Without Ideology

So how do the parties' 'advisors for Arab affairs' go about setting up and sponsoring lists in villages? In the past it used to take place in the open. Today, activists and their chosen heads of the lists consult secretly and usually outside the village.

Mithqal Abu Yunis, a teacher from Sakhnin and an activist in the DFPE for the last 12 years, told *Al Fajr* that one has to see how "the Zionist parties play their dirty game." Abu Yunis, who has a rich experience in this regard, remarked that then and now *hamula* differences are the determining factor in the formation of different Zionist-backed lists.

Party activists would visit a head of family and suggest he form a list to fight the elections. The wheels were oiled through promises — the appointment of a son or others from the family as teachers; jobs in government offices; the paving of a road leading to his house or the family's quarter. In the '50s and '60s when the Labour Party controlled the government and the Histadrut they could dominate the job market. The National Religious Party — in every coalition since 1948 — has also been well placed to distribute largesse through its ministries. Abu Yunis points out that the 'selection' process goes two ways.

The selection of one *hamula* inevitably aroused the envy of another, which would immediately initiate a list of its own and be in the market for a Zionist backer. "Thus," Abu Yunis remarked, "it is not political or ideological reasons which push family heads to form lists connected with Zionist parties, and which make them choose this party or that." He speculated that none of the nominal heads of Zionist-backed parties in villages understand the political platform of their own group.

The position of a *hamula* head is traditionally a strong one. According to Abu Yunis, most people believed until recently that a family had to have someone to represent it to Israeli officials. Until recently the *hamula* head was virtually unquestioned — the whole family would obey orders or instructions. Consequently, when an Israeli party recruited the heads of the family, no effort needed to be exerted to get the votes of the whole family. "And certainly no ideological debate," noted one Galilee villager. Political activists with nationalist sentiments play down any attempt to over-complicate this political process. The *hamula* heads, said one veteran village activist, are "mere unconscious tools in the hands of the Israeli authorities."

And how did the wheels turn? According to a former activist in a Zionist-backed list from Sakhnin who refused to have his name published, the heads of families were paid by the Zionist parties. He added that votes were bought from small *hamulas* to back the list of a larger family.

In support of this, Mazen Abu Yunis, a Communist from Sakhnin, told *Al Fajr* that during a fight in 1978 between representatives of Zionist-backed lists and representatives of DFPE in Sakhnin, documents and receipts came into his hands showing that Zionist-backed lists' representatives were paid. "Almost every person knows that 'collaborators' receive money," he stated.

Family disputes were always a major factor in motivating multiplication of *hamula* lists and agreements with Zionist parties. "The Israeli official policy in the Arab sector," said Mithqal Abu Yunis, "has been to use disputes, encourage and expand them, so that *hamulas* cannot unite against oppression and discrimination imposed by the Israeli government on the Palestinians." He admitted that there has always been family fanaticism in Arab villages, but, "If the Israelis had not intervened in the internal affairs of the Arab masses, family differences would have almost disappeared by now."

Change

In the last decade there has been a change in the tactics of the Israelis. The exposed discrimination and discredited old leadership was being over taken by educated people from the new generation. Israel wanted these people to continue control. In 1971, *Ahudat Avoda* (Labour Association), which is a branch of the Labour Party, sponsored a meeting in Sakhnin to which a number of young educated people were invited. At the meeting, the head of the association criticised the traditional leadership and talked of a plan to build an educated elite which could "develop the Arab villages."

Mithqal Abu Yunis, one of the people who was invited, told *Al Fajr* that the head of the association tried to appear neutral and unconnected with the Labour Party. "But shortly afterwards everything was clear, and the plan was discovered by us. Most of the participants withdrew," he said. Abu Yunis remarked that in other villages the policy met with some success.

Bribery is not the only tool used to 'get the vote out'. Teachers and other government employees are invariably pressured by the Shin Bet (secret police) on the eve of every election. Applicants for teaching posts are interviewed by the Shin Bet and expected to inform the authorities what teachers say in school and to be active in mobilising the Zionist vote. "I've been through this experience in my 19 years of teaching experience," said Mithqal, "but I refused to do what I was told." Because of this and because he openly joined the DFPE he was taken to the police station several times and threatened with the sack.

He recalls that even five years ago almost every teacher worked or pretended to be working for Zionist parties. "They simply feared they would lose their jobs if they did not do that," he explained.

Today things have changed in Sakhnin. Teachers who were looked on as "their" activists by Zionist parties openly take part in anti-government rallies and criticise governmental policy towards Arabs. "This is due to growing political consciousness after Land Day 1976," Abu Yunis said.

The process of list formation has also been revamped, but only tactically. The family is still the focus for Zionist parties, though they sometimes take a back seat. *Hamulas* have also started issuing progressive-sounding manifestos — similar in content to those of the DFPE. The programme of the "Progress and Rehabilitation" list (a family list in Sakhnin) is almost exactly the same as that of the DFPE. "But in fact," Abu Yunis remarked, "this is a new tactic which is intended to mislead the people and make them believe that it is a national list and identifies with the Palestinian national struggle in Israel." He says no greater proof exists of the fact that the majority of Arabs in Israel no longer believe in the credibility of family lists, "whose heads are not willing to resist discrimination and land confiscation."

In Sakhnin there are only three family lists running against the DFPE and the radical progressive national movement. There were seven *hamula* lists in 1978, when the DFPE list won the election. In other villages the number of family lists has also dropped. "This is clear evidence of the successive defeats the Israeli policy has been suffering in the last decade," ended Abu Yunis.

The poll on October 25 will tell.

Al Fajr: **What can rescue the Palestinian issue from the present stalemate?**

Yasir Arafat: A unified Arab stand.

Al Fajr: **How likely is that to happen?**

Yasir Arafat: Easily. Arab leaders should simply rise up to their historic, national responsibilities. It is a simple question for the Arab nation — "to be or not to be."

Al Fajr: **How likely is it that these Arab leaders will do that? The Palestinian people have been waiting for them to do so since 1948, at least.**

Yasir Arafat: I don't know if I can say I know them... Their responsibilities to the Arab people we will have to discuss at the next Arab summit.

Al Fajr: **Reports in Washington indicate that Reagan may amend his plan so that it is closer to the Fez resolutions. What would be your reaction if that was the case?**

Yasir Arafat: We Palestinians, at least, have the right to say that the American administration has lost credibility with us. Especially when I remember the written assurances from Philip Habib that the US would protect our defenceless camps in Beirut. Despite this agreement, once we left Beirut the US did not do all it could to prevent Israel from entering West Beirut, and it even gave them a green light to do just that. The massacre at Sabra and Shatila is also a dark stain on the American, French and Italian armies.

Also recently the US delegate to the UN declared his government's support for Jewish settlement on the West Bank. What happened to the promises Reagan made to the Arab leaders to freeze Israeli settlements on the occupied Palestinian land? And don't forget that our children are being killed with US-made weapons, which are also being financed with the taxpayers' money. I want to ask the American people: do they know that the tax money they give Israel is being transformed into bullets, phosphorous bombs and cluster bombs to kill our people and our students at Bir Zeit University and the Islamic University in Hebron? Do they know that our people have become guinea pigs for American weapons in Israeli hands?

Al Fajr: **What is the reason for the Beqa'a mutiny?**

Yasir Arafat: Arab intervention and conspiracy, basically Syrian and Libyan. The Palestinians involved are simply puppets... but as was decided at the central council, we remain open-minded and willing to solve this problem with our brothers in Syria.

Al Fajr: **How do you see a solution to the Beqa'a events?**

Yasir Arafat: As I mentioned earlier, we experienced another similar Syrian attempt in 1976 which lasted for six months and included tanks and other Syrian weapons rolling all the way to Beirut...

Al Fajr: **Some analysts believe that your personal relationship with President Assad is playing a role in this conflict. Is it so?**

Yasir Arafat: This is wrong, politically and nationally. Everybody knows that before last year's war we discussed every little issue with the Syrian brothers, and my relations with the same leaders were very strong. However, I would like to say if the friction is between myself and President Assad, I am willing to relinquish all of my rights, for national issues are above individuals and individual interests.

Al Fajr: **Also from Washington it was revealed that US officials at the State Department were investigating allowing into the US up to 50,000 Palestinians from Lebanon who are believed to be in danger. How would you respond to such news, as the PLO chairman?**

Yasir Arafat: We tell them, thank you Shultz, but no thank you. We want 50,000 Palestinians to go not to the US but to their homeland.

It is not only the American administration that acknowledges these facts (about the unsafe and dangerous conditions for Palestinians in Lebanon) but members of the European community as well, who had advanced to Gemayel a written communique drawing his government's attention to Palestinian conditions in Lebanon. There exists now in Lebanon a continuing slow and systematic process of liquidating Palestinians. It is a great massacre being calculated and executed in cold blood, which also includes daily assassinations and deportations. Ten days ago Beirut's Akka Hospital (which belongs to the Palestinian Red Crescent society) was bombed. Eighty percent of this hospital's patients are Lebanese and are treated free of charge.

Also, the Palestinian Research Centre, which was based in Beirut, was again the target of a car bomb, killing 13 men and women researchers, among them Hanni Shahin, the wife of the director of the centre, brother Sabri Jiryis. Why aren't the Marines protecting Palestinians and their institutions in Beirut?

Al Fajr: **I am in possession of a number of telexes you sent the Palestine Information Office in Wahington DC as early as September 15, 1982 requesting that some Arab ambassadors in the American capitol warn American officials that a massacre was taking place in Shatila and Sabra. Can you confirm the existence of such telexes? Were they delivered and what did these American officials do when they were told of their content?**

Yasir Arafat: Yes, these telexes were delivered to the Arab ambassadors following a meeting of the council of Arab ambassadors in Washington, which was held upon request of our representative in Washington. A group of Arab ambassadors representing the whole council, including the ambassadors of Tunis, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, I believe, met with American officials and informed them of what I had relayed to our representative. The American officials' reaction was that they had sent some officials to check on Sabra and Shatila and that they had found nothing unusual.

Al Fajr: **Palestinians both in the '48 territory and the '67 territories expressed their utmost support of you and of the PLO immediately after news of the Beqa'a mutiny became known. How important to you is their support and what would you say to them?**

Yasir Arafat: I call this the tide which came once the conspiracy against us became known. To every child, to every man and woman, young and old, to every youth and all Palestinians in our land, I say thank you. I also say to them our pledge remains and so does our oath, that we will meet in Jerusalem.

Our people are a giving people, and a people of sacrifice. That is why they are great, even in tribulation.

Arafat closed by citing a phrase from the holy *Quran*, number 17, *Bani Israel*, or Sons of Israel : **"If ye did well ye did well for yourself. If ye did awry, ye did it against yourself. We permitted your enemies to disfigure your faith and to enter your temple, as they had entered it before, and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power."**

THE REASON FOR THE BEQA'A MUTINY IS ARAB INTERVENTION AND CONSPIRACY, MAINLY SYRIAN AND LIBYAN. THE PALESTINIANS INVOLVED ARE MERELY PUPPETS...

Ghassan Bishara interviews Yasir Arafat

REAFFIRMING THE NATIONALIST STANCE

Al Fajr: **A year has passed since the end of the last Israeli-Palestinian war. What has happened during this past year? How is the Palestinian revolution faring?**

Yasir Arafat: I would like to remember now the Israeli-American decision taken at the start of the invasion, on June 4, 1982, which aimed at liquidating the PLO, its political existence and military forces and destroying its infrastructure. What has happened since? The Palestinian-Lebanese unified forces fought together against the Israeli invading army — the greatest and proudest Arab battle in contemporary Arab history, despite the great gaps both in weaponry and numbers between the two fighting forces. Nonetheless in accordance with resolutions of the PLO military council and the Palestine National Council (PNC), we not only succeeded in escalating our military attacks on Israeli forces in Lebanon, but in coordination with the Lebanese resistance, we turned these attacks into a war of attrition against the Israeli presence in Lebanon.

This was confirmed by Israeli military sources and is considered one of the reasons the Israeli government redeployed its forces to the Awali River in order to minimise their casualties. Thus, what they thought was going to be a three-to-five day journey into Lebanon against our forces has become a trap for their continued presence in Lebanon.

Of course in the face of this reality and the success of our forces, the conspiracies against us multiplied. Events in the Beqa'a (valley), resulting from Arab interference, are mere attempts by these Arab regimes, masked behind Palestinian names and symbols, at achieving what Israel failed to achieve last year in Beirut. But I have to say that these events are but a replay of the attempts in 1976, during which the same Arab sources used practically the same Palestinian names and symbols, such as *Saiqa* (A Syrian government-supported Palestinian grouping) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC) of Ahmad Jibril.

In 1976 they used the Palestine Liberation Army through General Budeiri, now they are using Abu Musa and a renegade Palestinian faction, Abu Nidal, and other Palestinian names. But I have to tell them that they cannot harm us, though they may be able to scratch us, and despite passing 115 days since they began this Beqa'a conspiracy, they have not hurt us.

However, in spite of all of these attempts and since the Israeli army first bombed us on June 4, 1982, we can say that we are here to stay until victory. To those like (US Special Envoy to the Middle East Philip) Habib who thought that our dispersal among nine Arab countries would finish us, I have to say that we have created nine new revolutionary bases with the help of these nine Arab governments.

We are also proud of having been able to reconstruct our various institutions and research centres which were destroyed in Lebanon and Beirut. A few days ago King Hussein (of Jordan) agreed that the Palestine Research Centre could open its doors in Amman, following its closure by the Israeli forces and their robbing it of its valuable books and archives.

Al Fajr: **You just said that Israel's objectives were the destruction of the PLO and its political and military infrastructure. European military analysts read (Israeli Premier Menachem) Begin's imminent resignation as a consequence or the Lebanon war. How do you read Begin's resignation?**

Yasir Arafat: . . . This is what I've said many times before — didn't I say that the war of last summer would create a volcano in the region? I would like to point out that (ex-US Secretary of State Alexander) Haig, (ex-Israeli Defence Minister Ariel) Sharon and now Begin have all gone as a result of the war — and we are still here.

Begin's resignation, when it comes, will be the result of the still rising number of Israeli casualties. Two days ago the US Central Intelligence Agency's Stansfield Turner admitted that Israeli casualties caused by the war are 2500 while Israel admits only 515 or 516. (Stansfield Turner's interview was with a London-based Saudi Arabic weekly *Al Majallah* — page 4, August 20-26, 1983). We, however, based our own information on Israeli sources, and know that the figure is even greater than that. The effect of the volcano is not yet over. There is more to come. I am not a magician, but my reading of the situation is that there will be more to come. . .

I'd like to point out that Haig, Sharon and Begin have all gone as a result of the war – and we are still here.

Al Fajr: **What avenues for a solution to the Palestinian problem are there to pursue considering that the PLO has lost the military option with its departure from South Lebanon?**

Yasir Arafat: We had not used Lebanese territory for attacks against Israel since I agreed at the Tunis (Arab League) Summit in 1979 not to do so. This was in response to a request by the Lebanese government. (The Israeli reaction was that) they launched two wars against us, one in the summer of 1981 and the invasion of last year, during which Lebanon and Palestine lost 72,000 killed and wounded. The majority of those were women and children.

Now, since we agreed to leave South Lebanon, in the past three months, with Israeli confirmation, we have initiated 355 operations against Israeli forces.

Our revolution is not only with the gun, for if it were we would be thieves and robbers — our revolution is with a surgeon's scissors, a farmer's hoe, a worker's hammer, a Palestinian woman sewing for her children late at night and a newborn Palestinian child on Palestinian soil. Our people in the occupied territories came out to defend our achievements in a tide-like movement when the news of the Beqa'a events became known.

Al Fajr: **It appears that a stalemate has developed on the political level since the negotiations with Jordan stopped. Do you agree?**

Yasir Arafat: The dialogue with the Jordanian government didn't end. Even now I say that the door remains open for a continued dialogue with Jordan. I shut neither a door, nor a window, nor any small opening on further dialogue with Jordan. We may have disagreed on some aspects, but we remain ready and willing to continue the dialogue with Jordan, depending mainly on the Jordanian party. In this regard we are obliged to execute the resolutions of the PNC, and we will.

Al Fajr: **Why did the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue stop? Did the Jordanians aim to receive a mandate from the PLO to represent the Palestinian people in any future negotiations?**

Yasir Arafat: No. The truth is that the Jordanian government didn't demand the mandate you are talking about. The disagreement with Jordan was about the bilateral communique regarding the Reagan Plan (of September 1, 1982). We argued that any Palestinian-Jordanian diplomatic move must be in accordance with the Fez (16th Arab League) Summit resolutions. Our brothers in Jordan argued that the Fez resolutions don't have mechanisms for negotiations and a solution, while the Reagan Plan does. We believe that the Fez Summit resolutions do have mechanisms and those are within the Arab nation's capabilities.

About the Reagan Plan, I have to say that while it denies our right to self-determination, granting that very same right to 1800 Falkland Islanders, it denies us a very basic right which is recognised by the United Nations and basic to the American political system and the American people. . . I am aware that the American people do sympathise with our plight, contrary to their government, but it should be made clear that US interests can't be forever protected in the Middle East while the American government is bypassing our basic right to self-determination.

THE QUEST FOR AN INFORMED WESTERN PUBLIC

Ghassan Bishara interviews Khaled al-Hassan

During a recent visit to Tunis, we asked for and were given a chance to interview Khaled al-Hassan in his capacity as the head of Fatah information. Al-Hassan, or Abu al-Said, as he is better known within Palestinian ranks, is highly articulate and very well informed, thus making him ideal for public relations in the Western world, where much information about the Palestinian-Arab cause remains to be disseminated. While sipping Arab coffee in the elegant quarters of the information department in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, the following ensued.

Al Fajr: **It has been said that a major Palestinian shortcoming is in the area of public relations. In your new capacity in the information department, first, do you agree that information is a Palestinian shortcoming and second, what do you intend to do about it?**

Al-Hassan: I do admit that we have shortcomings in our public relations with the West, not only because we were unable to reach Western public opinion but also because we are unable to go through the Western mass media, which, in a way, is controlled by anti-Palestinian elements. This does comply with the strategies and policies of their own governments, which are anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab. We believe that the more American and Western people know about the truth in the Middle East, the more they will support us. Public relations to us is a necessity, not to convince people of our point of view but to inform them about our cause and our struggle. This is why we will be paying public relations special attention, knowing how hard that will be because the government in the US is not allowing us to talk to the American people directly. On the other hand, all that is needed is being provided to the Zionist lobby to present their case to the American public.

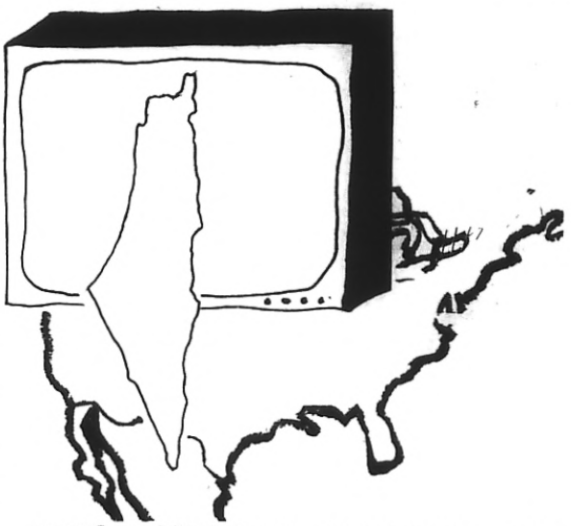
We believe that since the truth is on our side we will win over American public opinion. The American people, just like any other people, are good and live according to their values, but there is (a gap) between their values as a society and the practices of their own government. As for myself, I hope I will be able to achieve something out of this goal, with the help of all of our friends, including those in the US. We do not want anybody to support us against anybody else but simply to behave in accordance with their own values. The American peoeple believe in self-determination; we also do. They believe in democracy; we do so also. (And similarly with freedom and human rights). The American public have made 23 amendments to their constitution, in order to improve civil rights in their society. We want to do the same. Once they know these facts, they will support us. Otherwise, they do not support themselves.

Al Fajr: **How then do you plan to go about this? You have said it is not an easy task. Do you have any plans or strategy?**

Al-Hassan: It is not going to be impossible, though it is very complicated. With the experience Palestinians have gathered and their level of education we will be able to attract the proper people who will approach Western societies in accordance with their norms and values. I hope I will be able to make a good start.

Al Fajr: **Do you believe that helping the American people to see the truth, as you said, will therefore change US policy? Do you think that is all that is needed, or do you think it is a little more complicated than that?**

Al-Hassan: In the US you know there is democracy. How it is applied is their problem, not ours. The American people vote, and this is the power that gives Congress the right to make law. And if they are convinced of something they will pressure their Congresspersons to change their policy. It is a long process, I know, but we have been fighting for the last 65 years, not just since 1965 when Fatah was established, and will continue fighting by all means available including public relations until our goal is achieved. This is our destiny. It is not easy to find oneself stateless and without any rights, especially for us Palestinians, with the highest standard of education not only in the Arab world or third world but also compared with many of the Western countries. Education is our way of believing in the right of practice and the duty to achieve. Our status of being uprooted, stateless, rightless and without citizenship is the worst kind of humiliation and violation not only of human rights but of the philosophy of life itself. That is why we have to succeed.



Al Fajr: **Do you believe Arab governments have a role to play in the information arena for the Palestinian and Arab cause, and do you think they are fulfilling that role?**

Al-Hassan: The Arabs have a major role to play. We do not need anybody to talk for us. We Palestinians can talk for ourselves, but we need a lot of money for that, and here comes the Arab role. They are spending so much money on arms and we are trying to convince them to spend one percent of that on public relations (and that will be more than enough). Now they are better than before, when they gave zero. Second, our problem is difficult not because it is complicated — it is in fact a very simple one. We want to go back home. It is not philosophical or ideological. Our problem has become one between the superpowers; fortunately, I think God will forgive the Palestinians on the day of eternity because he put us in Palestine, the heart of the Arab world, which in turn is the heart of the whole world. It seems that the Arab world will continue to play an important role in energy in the future because of the sun in the Middle East and the Arab peninsula.

If the US support to Israel stops, not a single bullet will be needed to come to an understanding with the Jews who are now in Palestine. It will only take a very few years when Palestine will be united and we will all live in peace together. As a problem with international significance, the Palestine problem is being effected by Arab culture — being good and nice to your guests and not being too demanding of your friends. Arab governments do not create problems for the US, thus they are paying a price for being honest and good. We have to be dishonest...

Al Fajr: **The Arab governments have means such as oil, money, markets and others, all which can legitimately be used by them to pressure the US for the achievement of their goals and objectives. Do you believe the Arab governments should use these means with the US in order to achieve Palestinian rights?**

Al-Hassan: Arab economic power has to be used when dealing with the governments of the US and Europe. I want to be clear on this. Using their cards doesn't mean that the Arabs have to shut their oil wells completely, or withdraw their money from Western banks. Unfortunately, whenever you ask the Western governments for something, they immediately ask what they will get in exchange. We would like the Arab governments to adapt Western thinking in international affairs and to ask for something in return, not to give everything or nothing. Now the Arabs are giving everything for nothing in return.

Al Fajr: **The Palestinian issue is apparently stalemated now diplomatically and militarily. What do you think should happen to put it back on the front burner?**

Al-Hassan: Unfortunately, this is true, and it is also the US strategy. No one can argue that the Lebanon invasion was against the wishes of the US or that the '67 war was a surprise to the US, etc. Recent books published in the US, Seymour Hirsh's, for example, testify to the fact that the US foreign policy (in the Middle East) is reflective of the leaders' ambitions to be elected and re-elected. The US supplies Israel with everything from A to Z, and thus is capable of doing something about the Palestinian problem. We will continue our struggle or even armed struggle, and will show the Arab people how badly they are treated by the US and its policies. This is the only way to bring our cause to the world's attention. Those who recognise our rights world-wide are more than those who recognise Israel, but it is the power of the US on the side of Israel which is making the difference. This American policy will produce an anti-American Arab reaction, an anti-Arab regimes reaction, and the most affected by this will be the American people.

Al Fajr: **Having argued and proven American hostility to the Palestinian cause, and since the US government is not willing to pressure Israel, even in favour of plans and initiatives formulated and announced by the American president, do you think that the Arabs and Palestinians therefore should bring the Soviet Union back into the Middle East conflict?**

Al-Hassan: This is one weakness of Arab leadership, as they don't differentiate between communism as an ideology and the Soviet Union as a state. Communism and Islam are not compatible, but in order to keep communist ideology out of the Middle East it is not enough to be anti-communist. People want social justice (the lack of which brings communism). In the Arab world, leaders don't differentiate between ties with the Soviet Union as a state (and belief in communism). We always tell them that the US has all kinds of relations with the USSR. Why don't they? Arab regimes will recognise sooner or later that because of the US policy against our rights they will have to knock at the other door...but you cannot blame an impotent person for not having children...

Al Fajr: **Why do you think the Syrian government is trying to split Fatah and thus weaken to PLO?**

Al-Hassan: The Arab governments have interfered in our affairs since 1936 or even before. Also European governments have also always tried to have someone else represent the Palestinian people other than a Palestinian leader. Similarly, now the US is also opting for a non-Palestinian to speak on our behalf. Some Arab governments are now trying to play that role, to speak on our behalf. We would like to be together with any other Arab government (not to be excluded altogether). We are aware that we need the Arabs' support, but we will not give up our right to independently make our decisions. We know it is in our interest to be on good terms with all the Arabs...Maybe with Syria more than any other because of geopolitics. It is not easy for us to have differences with Syria, but if such are imposed on us, we will face them.

Al Fajr: **How will that come about?**

Al-Hassan: When the Arabs realise the US's double standard policy in the area, they will also realise that without the Palestinians they can realise nothing. Our people in the territories are facing the Israeli army with stones, our people are highly educated, and with time this problem with Syria will be solved.

"This Revolution will Defend Itself"

Interview with Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf — identified by his nom de guerre *Abu Iyad — in Kuwait by Radio Monte Carlo correspondent Nabil Darwish.*

Darwish: Abu Iyad, you met with the Algerian prime minister in Kuwait yesterday and with Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Sa'ad al-Abdullah al-Sabah (name as heard) this morning. What did you discuss during these meetings?

Khalaf: The most important topics we discussed dealt with the situation in the north and the Syrian forces which are besieging the north from all sides, in addition to the issue of some Palestinians whom these forces want to use in what they call and claim to be intra-Palestinian fighting. Yesterday, and for the first time, the Syrian artillery shelled some of Tripoli's suburbs. The shelling took place at about 11:45. The fire was not returned because all are eager to avoid a massacre. We explained this in detail during the Algerian and Kuwaiti meetings.

The second subject, which dealt with the steps that began under the name of theatrical dissensions, was that of handing offices over to the dissident group.

Darwish: But, Abu Iyad, would you allow me...

Khalaf: ...the declaration that all of Fatah supports the dissidents. We know that all the Fatah movement's property in Damascus has been seized. Abu Usamah Mohammed was also arrested and forced to sign concessions in favour of the dissidents.

Darwish: Excuse me, Abu Iyad, but you know that the day before yesterday some Palestinians announced that they had joined (the dissidents). Yesterday several pilots, engineers and cadres announced that they had joined in. These announcements were made by some Palestinian officials. What about these joinings and do you expect more?

Khalaf: First of all, there is nothing called joinings. The dissident movement has been going on for more than five months. What has happened to make these people join now? This is a small group of three or four pilot officers who were approached right at the beginning of their movement. There were no new joinings. They were only theatrical acts to make the public think that the dissident movement is growing. This is a prelude to pressure Abu 'Ammar Sa'ad, the official in charge of Syria's region (*iqlim*) into joining them and to say that all have taken their side.

Darwish: Do you think that he will join them?

Khalaf: During the next 48 hours new theatrical dissensions will take place in order to announce that Syria's entire region has taken their side. There is also the possibility of announcing a provisional dissident command at any moment.

Darwish: What is the purpose of these joinings and what is their relationship to the situation in Tripoli, northern Lebanon?

Khalaf: As I have told you, the relationship is as follows: once they complete their massacre and schemes, they will announce that all Fatah in Damascus and in Syria in general as well as in the Beqa'a and the north is with the dissidents. Subsequently, they will announce that there is a new Fatah and a new Fatah leadership under Abu Salah (Nimr Salah) and his clique. Eventually, they will call for a PNC session and Abu Salah, in his capacity as the new commander in chief, will present some new Fatah names to the PNC. In my opinion there is a collusion into which PNC speaker Khaled al-Fahum and some (PLO) Executive Committee members have joined.

Darwish: This is a serious accusation against Khaled al-Fahum. Are you sure about these collusions? Do you have any practical evidence proving them?

Khalaf: I am certain that these collusions are taking place in order to put pressure on the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) so that all will follow this scheme, hold a PNC session and form a new Palestinian-Syrian leadership. This is the scheme which is financially supported by Libya and geographically, militarily and politically supported by Syria. This scheme is present. Actually we are surprised at the Arab silence over the events taking place.

Palestinians everywhere must rise in defence and say "Take your hands off the PLO." The Arab nation is also required to take this stand.

Darwish: Abu Iyad, you said that yesterday the Syrian artillery pounded some positions in Tripoli. Such reports have not reached us from the news agencies. Do you expect further escalation?

Khalaf: I think that they are eager to complete the scheme before the convocation of the Arab Summit Conference so that they can come to the Arab Summit with a new leadership formed from Abu Salah and his group. They are looking for names of people who can act as chairman of the executive committee. Several names have been submitted, including that of Khaled al-Fahum.

Darwish: Abu Iyad, during your meetings with the Kuwaiti Amir and the Algerian prime minister, you may have also discussed the Lebanese situation, which is similar to the Palestinian situation. You may have discussed, for example, Walid Jumblatt's step on the Lebanese mountain and his position on the Palestinians. Is there anything new in this regard?

Khalaf: All are apprehensive about this step and say that this step may be part of the partition plan. Therefore, we are watching the situation and they are watching the situation, too, hoping that this step will not be one carrying the seeds of partitioning Lebanon. However, it is well known that the subject is not that of the Beqa'a and the north or of evacuating the fighters who are related to the Fatah movement. This subject is related to the scheme aimed at dividing Lebanon, so that the north and the Beqa'a will be controlled by the Syrians, and the *Jisr al-Awali* (Awali bridge) and the south by Israel. The Arab nation will know that this is the real scheme. The aim is not that of strengthening the dissident group against Yasir Arafat or the Fatah leadership. The aim is to drive away anyone who constitutes an obstacle along the path. This is the aim and people have begun to know and see this scheme.

Darwish: Is there anything new in the relations between Walid Jumblatt and Abu 'Ammar (Yasir Arafat) or between the Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and the Palestinian Fatah movement under the leadership of Abu 'Ammar?

Khalaf: Despite everything — despite all the bad things which Walid Jumblatt said about brother Yasir Arafat and the Fatah leadership and also despite Jumblatt's stands which are now somewhat understood — we prefer now not to go further into this subject until it reveals itself in the future.

Darwish: If a confrontation takes place in Tripoli, as you said yesterday, and as Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir) said and also as Abu 'Ammar says daily, what do you expect the results to be? Will there be a second and final exit from Lebanon, and how will it occur?

Khalaf: I do not want to predict events, but I can say in all honesty that this revolution will defend itself. It will not surrender. It will try with all its power to prevent a massacre of the Lebanese and Palestinian people and also of the Syrian Army, which we hold in great esteem. We believe that the Syrian Army's real place is on the frontline against the Zionist enemy, not against us or any Lebanese. Therefore, we will try to prevent a new massacre. This is our first and last option.

Darwish: Allow me a final question, Abu Iyad. Last time, when you spoke about large-scale clashes in the Beqa'a and about the siege of your forces, Damascus said that was imaginary talk and that there were no clashes. It also said that the Fatah forces enjoyed freedom of movement and therefore reached Tripoli. Perhaps you were exaggerating on this subject?

Khalaf: First, the subject is known to all observers, who saw with their own eyes the exodus of more than 1000 fighters from the Beqa'a. These observers also saw the Lebanese citizens bidding farewell to the Fatah forces. These forces also remained under siege for more than six days. They then succeeded in breaking through the siege in a courageous and miraculous manner. I believe there is a Syrian statement which says that these forces left the Beqa'a because they were obstructing operations in the mountains. They mentioned the names of seven Syrian officers and some Libyans who were killed at the hands of Fatah. This, of course, is not true. But the plan demands that only Syria exist in the Beqa'a and in the north. The Syrians began with Fatah, but they will also deal with the rest of the Palestinian organisations, including the dissidents, because they do not have a place on the Syrian political map.

Darwish: Until last week, you, Abu 'Ammar and Abu Jihad were talking about the hope of reaching a rapprochement with Syria. Can we deduce from what you just said that you have reached a deadlock with Syria?

Khalaf: I believe that Syria has now made up its mind and wants to move from the phase of Fatah to the phase of the PLO. It wants to finally liquidate this organisation and set up a pro-Syrian one, so as to eliminate the idea of genuine Palestinian representation. Our people in the occupied territories and elsewhere are mature. They know that the Syrian plan is to show to the whole world that the PLO is a Syrian protege. This is what the Syrians want. This, of course, would deprive the PLO of the right to comprehensively represent the Palestinians. This is what they want and what they have aimed for since the first day of the dissident movement on May 10.

Darwish: You must have spoken in these terms this morning during your meeting with the Amir of Kuwait and during your meeting yesterday with the Algerian prime minister. What was the reply to these serious accusations, Abu Iyad?

Khalaf: At any rate, we now have delegations in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Baghdad. Delegations will also be sent to other Arab countries. What we heard today and yesterday from the Kuwaiti and Algerian brothers is reassuring. We are expecting practical steps from everyone because the PLO cannot face this plan alone. Nor can the Palestinians face it alone. What is required first is for the Palestinians everywhere to rise in defence of the PLO and to say: "Take your hands off the PLO." The Arab nation is also required to adopt the same stand. The Arab regimes are clearly required to define their positions so we can know our path in the near future.